

The Bible Message
For Modern Manhood



Craig S. Thoms



Class B5511

Book T45

Copyright N^o

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT

THE BIBLE MESSAGE
FOR
MODERN MANHOOD

THE BIBLE MESSAGE FOR MODERN MANHOOD

BY
CRAIG S. THOMS, Ph. D.

11

PHILADELPHIA
THE GRIFFITH & ROWLAND PRESS
1912

BS511

.T45

Copyright 1912 by
A. J. ROWLAND, Secretary

Published December, 1912



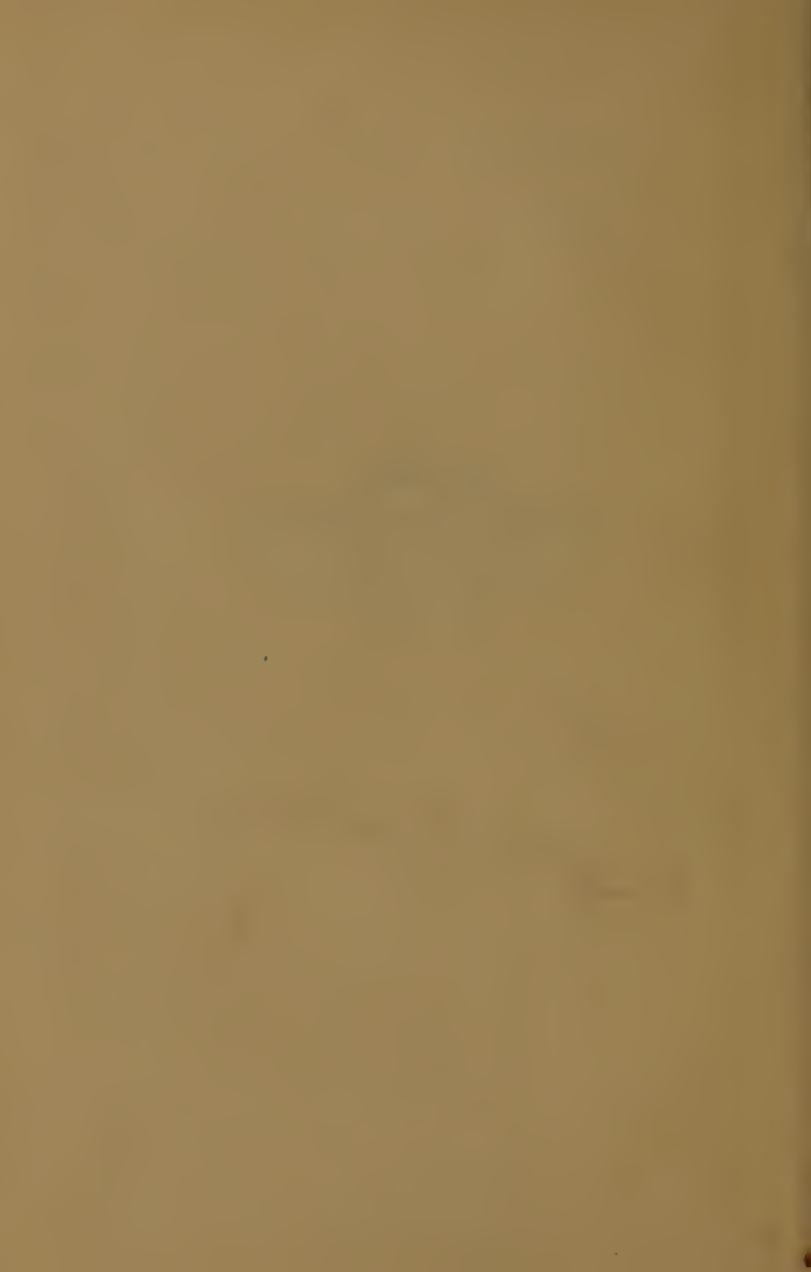
\$.75

© Cl. A330457

no 1

TO
My Wife

WHOSE FELLOWSHIP OF THOUGHT
HAS GIVEN UNCEASING JOY AND
WHOSE DEVOTION TO THE BEST IN
LIFE HAS BEEN A CONSTANT
INSPIRATION



PREFACE

THERE are two different things, as Doctor Paulsen says, about a page of print: First, By what processes did it come to be? and secondly, What does it mean? This volume passes as briefly as possible over the first question and seeks an answer to the second. The answer it seeks, however, is not detailed nor exhaustive, but rather the central one. The author's aim, in discussing each Bible narrative treated, has been to point out the theme which lies in it as an organizing principle, and which has vital significance for every age.

The aim throughout has been, not to write about the Bible, nor to discuss critical questions, but rather, by interpreting some of the principal narratives in the light of the best conservative scholarship of our day, to give the word of God itself a firmer grip upon every mind and a deeper hold upon every heart. The author seeks, not to speak for the word of God, but to set forth that

Preface

word in such light that it shall speak for itself.

The book is sent forth with the hope that, amid the shifting thought incident to times of critical study, it may help young men especially to hold fast to the fundamental teachings of GOD'S REVEALED WORD.

It has been found impracticable to give credit for suggestions received from many books by specific references to the works. A bibliography is therefore appended, in which are set down a few of the volumes that have been found helpful.

April 1, 1912.

C. S. T.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I

THE TRAINING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. The Narrative of Creation.....	13
II. The Temptation of Adam and Eve	29
III. Cain and Abel.....	49
IV. The Great Flood.....	71
V. Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God	89
VI. Jacob, the Man who Conquered by Being Conquered.....	109
VII. Joseph, the God-accompanied Man	127
VIII. The Redemption of Israel from Egypt	145
IX. The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan	169

Table of Contents

PART II

THE MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE

CHAPTER	PAGE
X. The Book of Jonah.....	189
XI. The Work of the Prophets....	209
XII. The Nature of Messianic Prophecy	231
XIII. Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy.	253
XIV. The Significance of Jesus Christ for the Modern Man.....	265

PART I

THE TRAINING OF GOD'S
PEOPLE

II

The Narrative of Creation

Genesis, the First and Second Chapters

I

IN the present condition of biblical knowledge it is of the utmost importance for every one to maintain a right mental attitude toward reverent Christian scholarship. Many good people, confusing devoutness with conservatism, are prejudiced against warranted conclusions of biblical investigation; while other equally good people accept all too readily every new speculation. Either of these mental attitudes may result from sheer prejudice or pride of opinion and may be accompanied with very superficial knowledge of the matters under investigation.

It hardly need be said that there are earlier and later conceptions of the Old Testament Scriptures. The earlier conceptions obtained before modern scholarship was born, while the later ones are the product of that scholarship. Those who hold to the earlier views are neither more nor less devout and consecrated than those

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

who hold to the later ones; but between the two views young people especially feel themselves in a transitional, or at least an uncertain, state of mind with reference to the Old Testament literature. If one were to ask, "What are the old views?" and, "What are the new views?" many could not tell; and even among those better informed different answers would be given. The conscious state of the average man with reference to the whole matter is that of confusion. Surely the net result of Old Testament scholarship ought to be, and doubtless will ultimately be, to lead men to emphasize the things that are vital to spiritual life and to send to the background of religious thought and emphasis things unedifying to that life.

In this first chapter we are to consider the story of creation, found in the first two chapters of Genesis. The subject may be simplified by considering it, first, as to the facts and, secondly, as to the teaching.

1. As to the Facts

(1) Who was the author of the narrative? When was the narrative written? What was the nationality of the author?

The Narrative of Creation

Was he prophet, priest, sage, or scientist? What is the nature of the writing—history, legend, allegory, parable, prose, or poetry?

It is important to observe that regarding these questions the narrative itself is utterly silent. Had answers to them been vital to the message which the narrative contains, such answers certainly would have been made clear. But since the narrative ignores these questions, surely it is proper for us at least to put them to one side. Let us deliver them over to the scholars—the critics, archeologists, Assyriologists, Egyptologists; to those who love to excavate buried cities, dig up tablets and monuments, decipher hieroglyphics, and to any others who are able to help in the work. Let us ask such men to do their best, and return to us with their report. We shall be interested in whatever they may discover, but not shaken by it, since it cannot annul any spiritual teaching of the word.

Surely it is folly from the religious point of view to contend seriously as to whether any writing of the Scriptures is history, tradition, legend, allegory, parable, prose,

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

or poetry; for by all of these means we find God speaking to men. Read the account of the rise and fall of David's kingdom, the narrative of the Babylonian captivity, the lives of Christ and of Paul. You are reading history and biography. Turn to the Psalms and the poems of the great prophets, and you find God speaking to men through poetry. Listen to Nathan's rebuke of David, where he speaks of the man's little ewe lamb (2 Sam. 12: 1-6), and to the story of the speaking trees (Judg. 9: 7-10), and you find God's messages made plain in allegory. Go to the teachings of Christ and you find the very heart of the gospel in parables.

Shall it be then a matter of acrimonious debate whether this story of creation is this or that kind of literature? We confess, of course, a scholarly interest in what the investigators bring to our notice, but are religiously indifferent to it, since it cannot invalidate the spiritual teaching, which Jehovah by his word is revealing to the souls of men. Very likely it may confirm the literal truth of the teaching.

(2) Many scholars affirm that in these first two chapters of Genesis there are two

The Narrative of Creation

distinct narratives woven together. This claim need not alarm or disturb us, nor are we supremely concerned to show whether it is true or false. The essence of the narrative is left us in either case. The scholars tell us that there is an earlier narrative of creation written by a prophet, or possibly a school of prophets; and a later one written by a priest, or possibly a school of priests. They tell us also that there is an earlier and a later Babylonian narrative of creation, as well as a Persian narrative; and that the clay tablets on which these narratives are written have been dug up from buried cities. They tell us further that there are traditions of creation which have been handed down in many nations. These facts none can question. We have no reason to doubt them, nor do we desire to doubt them.

Is this biblical story of creation then a composite narrative? And did the writer have earlier traditions and stories before him upon which he drew? I am not anxious about such questions, because they are matters without vital significance for God's message. It is exceedingly probable that the writer did have earlier materials

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

before him; for, as far as we know, God's method in teaching men has always been to require them to use the materials which they had at hand. The staff that is already in the hand of Moses he must use in delivering Israel. The few loaves and fishes the disciples must use in feeding the multitude. The lives of Christ that "many have taken in hand to write," Luke draws upon in writing his Gospel. It is not God's way to shoot messages like lightning from clear sky when men have materials at hand by which they may be conveyed. But what I seek to make plain is that questions of method in revelation are of minor importance as bearing upon the spiritual teaching.

2. As to the Teaching

Let us now go into the narrative itself, seeking an answer to the one question of chief importance, viz., What message does this narrative bring from God to the human heart?

(1) God created the world. In this narrative the ideas of God and the world are the primitive ideas of ancient civilization. God is thought of as being in the form of man. He acts like a man, thinks like a

The Narrative of Creation

man, speaks like a man. The earth is conceived as being flat, with a great dome or firmament above it. Beneath the flat earth there is the "great deep," and above the dome also there is water. "Windows of heaven" admit water to the earth from above, and "fountains of the great deep" answer a like purpose for the waters below. The conceptions of God and the world are those of the age, not those of modern science. Scientific conceptions have no place nor mission here. Had they been put into the narrative, they would have been unintelligible until within the last hundred years. Indeed, scientific terms are even now practically valueless as means of conveying spiritual truth. We say that God is cause or force or law, all of which is true enough, but what do we get out of such terms for our spiritual life? Even in this scientific age it is not until God is thought of in terms of personality that we are helped spiritually by the knowledge of him. It is when Christ bids us pray, "Our Father," that our souls grip a divine reality. It is when the Saviour speaks to us the parable of the Prodigal Son that we feel a tugging at our heart-strings. We get

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

nearest to God by conceiving him to be an enlarged human personality—anthropomorphism, as the theologians call it—not in terms of the chemical laboratory or of physics or in the discoveries of zoology or geology. The matchless story of creation in Genesis, told for the spiritual help of man, brings God nearer to the mind and heart than any scientific treatise could possibly do. What is its message? Jehovah, not idols, created the world. The world did not come by chance. It did not produce or create itself. And it was created for good. This is the first message of the narrative. Surely it could not be set forth more clearly nor uttered with greater majesty and power.

(2) Jehovah created man. All the conceptions here are very simple. An old Babylonian poem tells of a goddess creating a man, Eabani, from a bit of clay. He was clad only in the long hair which covered his body. He ate and drank and sported with the animals. To lure him from his strange companionship a beautiful woman was sent, and by her charms she wooed him from his barbarous life.¹ How primitive

¹ Kent, "Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History," p. 37.

The Narrative of Creation

and yet how poetic and beautiful these conceptions are!

Very similar are the conceptions in the biblical narrative. God molds from dust the form of a man, but there is no life. The form lies motionless and inert. Then, bending over the form, God breathes into it the breath of life, and it becomes a living soul. There is no modern science here. The conceptions are wholly primitive. And, as in case of the creation of the world, had they not been so the narrative would have been useless until very recent times, and not of much service then.

The lesson which the story holds is that "God breathed into man the breath of life." The form of the story is comparatively insignificant. And yet, pedagogically, this Genesis story has been the best in every age; and it is the very best to-day. As a quick and effective instrument of spiritual impression, assurance, and conviction, all the scientific knowledge that we possess is impotent beside it. Its clear-cut lessons are that man is God-inspired; he is created in the divine image; the divine life is in him. This is the deepest and sublimest fact of our nature. This great truth throbs

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

in every soul, becomes articulate in every prayer, impresses us anew beside every open grave, and is the very heart of the message of Christ to man, viz., that man by creation is a son of God.

(3) Jehovah created woman. The narrative represents God as first searching among the animals to find a helpmeet for man and as failing in the search. Then, upon Adam there falls a deep sleep, the rib (if that is what the word means) is taken from his side, and the wound is closed. From the rib and flesh taken the woman is formed. She is then brought to the man, who recognizes her kinship to himself, accepts her as his mate, and lives with her as his wife and helpmeet.

It is a beautiful story, primitive and oriental in every conception, simple in detail, yet laden with spiritual import. Should one expect science here? Even the suggestion seems sacrilege. Where in all the world can one find another story consisting of so few words that is such a matchless vehicle of thought and the bearer of such fundamental conceptions of the sexes, that woman is of the same flesh and blood as man; that the breath of God is in her as

The Narrative of Creation

in him; and that she is to him companion and helpmeet?

He who sees clearly the vital truths of this great narrative and realizes what a teacher it has been to mankind does not wonder at the high place the Hebrews gave to their women. He does not wonder that, under the influence of the Bible, the Greeks ceased to discuss whether woman had a soul. He does not wonder that with the progress of the centuries the home has been purified until woman's good name is held sacred by every man of honor. To him who knows the sad history of woman in heathen lands the Genesis story of creation is to her a decree of emancipation issued from the throne of the Eternal.

(4) Jehovah provides. Having created the man and the woman, God plants a garden eastward in Eden; i. e., the Creator provides for the comfort and enjoyment of his creatures.

Was this Garden of Eden a real garden? If so, where was it located? What were its fruits? Simply to ask such questions is to make plain how puerile and ridiculous they are in the face of a narrative so beautiful in conception, and so abundantly

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

reassuring for man's spiritual life. Geography and horticulture have no place here. The message is one of God's care and provision for those whom he has created. At this point the narrative is the forerunner of Christ's teaching that the God who cares for the lily and the sparrows cares with greater solicitude for man.

But the inspired writer does not stop when he has made clear God's provision for man's body. His eye is upon the spiritual part of man, that part which he has carefully shown to be inbreathed by God. In the garden Jehovah plants a tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and warns the created pair not to eat of the fruit of it lest they die.

In ancient literature one may trace many analogies of the tree of life and of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A Babylonian hero, after long search, finds a plant called, "The restoration of old age to youth," but it is snatched away from him by a serpent, so that he fails of immortality. Another legend tells of a fisherman who gained entrance to the abode of the gods, where he was given the "food of life," and by eating this food endless life was

The Narrative of Creation

secured. Trees were frequently thought to be media of revelation. God appears to Moses in the burning bush. During the period of the Judges there was a famous diviner's tree near Shechem. (Judg. 9:37.) In ancient Greece oaks and laurels were consulted by kings and philosophers. The Arabs to-day believe that the box-thorn sometimes utters prophetic words. The ideas of trees of life and of revelation were common conceptions among the ancients.²

In the light of such facts how shall we interpret this narrative of creation? Shall we inquire whether there was a real garden? Whether God actually planted trees? And what was the nature of their fruit? To do so is to become the victims of narrow literalism. Every man lives daily in a whole orchard of trees of the knowledge of good and evil and, contrary to the command of God in his soul, he is constantly tempted to partake of their fruit.

From this simple but truth-laden story, which on its face shows that it was written by some great prophet of God under the tuition of the Divine Spirit (and why not by

² See Kent, "Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History," pp. 36, 37.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

Moses?), we should catch the broad sweep of the eternal facts in which our lives are grounded: That man is God-created; that man and woman, because they are of the same flesh and blood, and made the one for the other, should hold each other in sacred honor; that God cares for man and makes provisions both for his bodily necessities and for his spiritual needs. These are primal truths that lie at the foundation both of our spiritual knowledge and our soul-culture.

111

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

Genesis, the Third Chapter

II

1. The Form of the Narrative

THE third chapter of Genesis, which narrates the temptation of Adam and Eve, is one of the most remarkable chapters in the Bible; remarkable in charm of literary form, in grasp of fundamental truth, in comprehensive understanding of human nature, and in exhaustive treatment of the problem of temptation. The writer sees human life to its depths and speaks for eternity.

(1) Regarding the form of the narrative, one should not be dogmatic. Some are inclined to say in haste: "If this narrative is not what I have believed it to be from childhood, I cannot hold to its inspiration." Such an attitude is unreasonably and arrogantly dogmatic. It does not consider sufficiently the difficulties which many have in retaining the beliefs of their childhood. It often presumes to decide scholarly ques-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

tions without the necessary scholarship and without having given the subject that study which guarantees competent judgment. In the present condition of biblical scholarship one's mind should be as open and flexible as possible regarding the literary form of such a narrative, in order that one's heart may be fully receptive of its spiritual message.

For centuries scholars regarded this narrative as history, but many have now come to a different and, as they believe, to a better view. The narrative itself bristles with the experiences of every man, and is brimming with elements of life that are universal.

(2) Before inquiring what the narrative teaches, we should notice a few orientalisms.

By the ancients the serpent was regarded as typical of wisdom and subtlety. Our Lord said: "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10: 16). On account of its lurking nature, sudden attack, and poisonous bite, the serpent was frequently employed to symbolize the enemy of man, as when John in the Revelation speaks of "the old serpent, he that is

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

called the Devil" (Rev. 12:9). It is natural and fitting, therefore, that from all the animals the serpent should be selected as the tempter of our first parents.

All suffering and misfortune was anciently regarded as the consequence of sin. This popular conviction is insisted upon by the three friends in the book of Job. It was held by our Lord's disciples who, on one occasion, asked the Master: "Who sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" (John 9:2.); to which our Lord replied: "Neither did this man sin, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him," thus correcting a conception which had prevailed for centuries. In the narrative of the temptation the pains of childbirth, the necessity of earning a livelihood by hard toil, and the serpent doomed to a prostrate form, are all attributed to sin.

(3) The closest parallel to this narrative in ancient literature is the story of a man and woman who were influenced by an evil spirit to disobey the Creator. By cutting down trees and killing animals, contrary to the will of God, they lost their innocence.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

2. The Teaching of the Narrative

A careful examination of the story of the temptation reveals the fact that the prophetic writer has a remarkably comprehensive grasp of the whole problem involved.

(1) Man comes from the hand of his Creator innocent. Adam and Eve are man and woman grown, and yet they are children. They manifest all the unconscious innocence of children three or four years of age. In this particular the writer is not dealing with a fanciful state, but with an actual condition through which all men and women pass as they grow from the cradle to maturity. In the cities of the Orient to-day one may see children unclothed, playing together in unconscious innocence. The writer, in dealing with the problem of temptation, naturally and properly goes back beyond all conscious temptation to that condition of innocence in which little children play in each other's presence naked and without shame. Thus in a few sentences is laid the foundation for the whole history of temptation from its first dim dawning to its ultimate consequences.

(2) Of all the trees in the garden, the

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

pair is forbidden only one. The words which the serpent utters are significant: "Hath God really said, 'Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden'?" That is, has God denied you anything whatsoever? The writer of the narrative makes a contrast between the many trees of which they may eat and the one of which they may not eat, a contrast which is absolutely true to life. Life's orchard is full of trees. And for every one that is denied us there are a hundred whose fruit we may enjoy. For every one that holds a temptation there are a hundred which have no suggestion of sin. To-morrow we go forth to our work; the day is spent in strenuous activity; we return weary, but with consciousness of achievement; it has been a good day. As we review its experiences we can recall only one or two points, and often none at all, at which we were tempted to sin. Or we throw off the cares of work and go for a day's pleasure. The morning hails us with delight; the waxing hours crown our day with blessing; every friend increases our satisfaction. At evening when we review the day's experiences we find that for every temptation to sin there have been a hundred

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

innocent delights and as many refreshing joys. The proportions of this narrative of man's first temptation are true to life. Only occasionally, and in comparatively few relations of life, are we severely tempted; while in the great majority of our points of contact with the world we know nothing whatever of temptation. Of the whole garden, with the exception of an occasional tree, we may freely eat.

(3) The actual forces of which we are conscious in temptation are clearly portrayed in this narrative. Neither in accuracy of delineation nor in vividness of portrayal can they be improved. On one side is God, who earnestly seeks man's good. On the other side is the serpent, guileful, argumentative, unscrupulous. And between these two stand the childlike pair, wondering, curious, and willing to be persuaded. Where shall one find a more accurate characterization of the opposing forces which he feels tugging at his soul in moments of temptation? And where shall one find drawn with greater precision his own mental and moral attitudes? It is evident that the inspired writer is not only master of his problem, but master also of the art of

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

setting forth that problem so as to bring conviction home to every man. Nowhere else in the Bible, unless it be in the temptation of our Lord in the wilderness, are the forces operative in temptation so clearly portrayed and man's duty when tempted so plainly indicated.

(4) As in life, so in this narrative, the tempter casts discredit upon the sincerity and integrity of God. He says: "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). When one stops to consider the matter, he knows that God desires his good. But sin is never reasonable. Notwithstanding the assertions of reason, when we are tempted there is in our hearts rebellion against God, which carries with it the suspicion that God is not quite sincere, and that he is endeavoring to withhold from us something that we may legitimately enjoy. Every temptation holds a subtle intimation that God at heart is not for us, but against us. Sin is the logical sequence of skepticism. Any justification of sin brands God as a deceiver who seeks to take advantage of one by withholding from him some

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

good. Thus this narrative expresses in vivid fashion what lies latent and unadmitted in the heart of every sinning person, viz., that what God says is not true, and what God requires is not warranted by facts.

(5) The same considerations which led Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit have always led men into sin. The text states them as follows: "And when the woman saw that the tree was (*a*) good for food, and (*b*) that it was a delight to the eyes, and (*c*) that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat" (Gen. 3:6). As to whether the tree was attractive to the sight, the woman was competent to judge; but as to whether it was good for food or would make her wise, she was wholly incompetent to judge. These supposed facts, which she assumed to be true on the authority of her tempter, could be known only by experience. They were wholly untrue, as the sequel shows.

But what an accurate representation is here of life as we know it! There is a glamour about temptation. To inexperienced eyes it has a subtle attractiveness.

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

And does not the tempter always argue that the thing forbidden is not so bad after all, indeed is really good for us, and that we need the wisdom that comes from the experience? Every one who has done personal work in winning men to Christ has heard the serpent's arguments times without number. Take, for example, the young man who is tempted to drink. The good fellowship, the jollity, the secret understandings which other young men have among themselves, are pleasant to his eyes. Already the tempter is saying to him that a social glass does not harm any one, that many great men have been drinking men, that a glass at the right time is really a good thing and puts one at his best; in the words of the narrative, that the apple is "good for food." The youth persuades himself also that every young man must "sow his wild oats," and that from doing so there comes a necessary experience and a knowledge of the world; in the words of the narrative again, that the apple is "to be desired to make one wise." In all temptation the processes are practically the same, and the prophetic writer is laying bare the most subtle wiles of the Evil One.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(6) After Adam and Eve have sinned they hide from God, who walks in the garden, desirous of talking with them as a father would talk with his children. This attitude of hiding from God after sinning is so familiar to every one's experience that it scarcely requires comment. Any man who was once accustomed to pray, but has ceased to do so, needs no one to tell him that he ceased to pray on account of his sins. And while his reason tells him that it is useless to hide from the all-seeing God, in his secret soul he does hide, and he cannot be at ease nor feel at home when God draws near. Sin against either God or man makes us in very truth hide away from the presence of those against whom we sin. This fact the narrative sets forth in matchless manner.

(7) When Jehovah called the guilty pair to account Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent, and the serpent made no reply. This portion of the narrative needs to be rescued from that silly facetiousness which has long obscured its deeper meaning. We need to be done with saying that "Adam-like, man always blames the woman." There is no question of sex here. The

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

teaching would be unchanged if Adam had tempted Eve. The facts in the narrative are just as they are in life. When one sins he hastens to shift the responsibility and to blame another for his fault. Occasionally a brave person with his lips says, "I take all the blame." But in his secret soul he does not take all the blame. The son believes that his father was too indulgent or that his mother persisted in looking only upon his best or that he was provided with too much money. The daughter believes that her mother neglected to tell her many things that for her safety she needed to know and that she ought to have been better guarded with respect to her friendships. Few there are who have wandered into paths of sin that do not hold others at least in part responsible.

Does this blaming of others seem cowardly? Too long we have thought it cowardly in Adam to blame Eve, but only because we have dealt in a trivial manner with the narrative. The deep truth which the great prophet is uttering is that no one ever sins alone. Others are always involved, and are always more or less to blame. No man lives, or can live to him-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

self. Our sinning all but begins before we are born. Especially in early years, our environment is the larger part of our life problem. Others are involved with us, and we with them. We are to blame for the sins of one another. One's Eve is the man or woman at his elbow who leads him to do wrong. And the clearness with which this fact is brought out in the narrative indicates the author's comprehensive grasp of the whole temptation problem.

(8) "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die," notwithstanding that God had said to her: "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." But the woman persuaded both herself and her husband that they could eat the fruit and escape the punishment. How true to life! No man, when he begins a course of sin, expects to incur the punishment for sin. He knows that others have incurred the punishment, but he expects somehow to escape. No young man who indulges in a social glass expects to fill a drunkard's grave. No embezzler expects to serve time behind prison-bars. No thief expects to commit murder and end his life on the gallows. No one, as a consequence

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

of social sin, expects to have his home broken up and himself disgraced. Who ever went into sin expecting a diseased body, a degraded mind, and a lost soul? Who ever sowed the wind with any thought of reaping the whirlwind? Who ever believed that through sin his heart would become hard, his conscience seared, his will-power impaired, his spiritual perception dulled, and his tastes degraded? All these results he may have seen in others, but in some way he expects to escape them. He believes in his own superior strength, or he is sure that he has wisdom to turn before passing the danger-line. In a word, he believes the serpent when it says to him, "Ye shall not surely die."

(9) None escapes punishment. The man is punished; in the sweat of his brow he is to till the soil. The woman is punished; in pain and travail she is to bring forth children. The serpent is punished; upon his belly he is to go all his days. With sin there is no trifling. No explanations or excuses are accepted. From the punishment of sin there is no escape. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:4).

It is to be noted that no complaint is

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

offered against the severity of God. His punishments are accepted in silence, and presumably as just and deserved. Such dealing with punishment indicates the revelation of the mind of the Spirit. The sinning man seeks to escape just punishment. The shallow man makes God careless of discipline, both degrading the parent and spoiling the child. But the prophet penetrates beneath all self-interest, shallowness, and sophistry, and deals with the unrepentant sinner even as does our Lord.

(10) After the sin is committed and the punishment pronounced, the guilty pair is driven forth from the garden. This is an act of great mercy. Life with God in the garden is henceforth intolerable.

It is to be noted that no mention is made of repentance. Had there been repentance, this driving forth from the garden would be untrue to life, for a repentant man seeks the presence of God, and God welcomes him, invites him, even goes to seek him. But it is evidently not within the purpose of the inspired writer to introduce the subject of repentance. He is dealing with temptation and, true to his theme, he deals with it consistently by showing whither it

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

drives those who yield to it. The great prophet here penetrates to the very heart of spiritual life, for the sinning man must either repent and return to God's fellowship or be driven from God's presence. For the unrepentant life in the presence of God is unbearable. It is both a great calamity and a great mercy, but nevertheless a great fact of life, that the sinning man, because of the benumbing of his moral sensibilities and the deadening of his spiritual perceptions, becomes ever more and more shut out from God.

(11) But who, however far gone in sin, does not still hope? And so there is in this narrative a promise which expresses the hope of the sinner's return to God's favor. The serpent has indeed "wounded the heel" of man, but the day is coming when even that wounded heel shall bruise the serpent's head. (Gen. 3:15.) Some have seen in this promise a prophecy of the Christ. Surely the promise is being realized through our Lord Jesus Christ. But certainly there is here, first of all, a declaration of the undying fact that under all human circumstances, and after whatever defeats, "hope springs eternal in the

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

human breast," and that for every sinning soul there is hope in God.

And thus from only a brief review of the narrative it is evident that the writer has sounded human nature to its profoundest depths. The history of temptation from beginning to end he has thoroughly mastered. As a teaching upon temptation this story, in its simplicity, comprehensiveness, directness, and power, is above and beyond all comparison. In the literature of the Bible itself it stands alone. It occupies only a single chapter of the sacred record, and yet not one element of temptation is wanting. *a.* Man comes from the hand of his Creator innocent. *b.* In a world filled with good things he is denied comparatively little, only the tree in the midst of the garden. *c.* In every temptation the persons involved are God, man, and the Evil One. *d.* Between God's will and the will of the tempter man must choose. *e.* To deceive man the tempter casts discredit upon the integrity and sincerity of God. *f.* Man is beguiled by temptation because evil takes on a form which is pleasant to the eyes, sweet to the senses, and brings a knowledge of the world. *g.* The sinning man hides from

The Temptation of Adam and Eve

God, and cannot be at home in his presence. *h.* The fallen man blames others for his fall, and others are involved with him. *i.* He who yields to temptation persuades himself that in his case the inevitable consequences will not follow. *j.* None escapes punishment. The unrepentant man goes ever farther from the presence of God, is driven forth from the garden. *k.* Yet hope does not die out of the heart, the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Who, by writing volumes on temptation, could add a syllable to the comprehensiveness and depth of this chapter?

It is significant of the prophet's understanding of the love and mercy of the Creator that he does not represent God as driving Adam and Eve from the garden as those who are abandoned to themselves and beyond the pale of the divine care. God in mercy and compassion clothes the guilty pair with coats of skin. Though in rebellion against him, though unrepentant and guilt-stained, yet they are the objects of his care.

111

Cain and Abel

Genesis, the Fourth Chapter

III

OUR first chapter considered the story of creation, in which we saw the prophetic narrative moving straight on to the fact that man is a spiritual being, made in the image of God. Our second chapter dealt with the account of the temptation of Adam and Eve, which exhibited in great fulness the various elements of temptation.

Next in the biblical order comes the story of Cain and Abel. And next also in the order of life come man's two fundamental relations: First, his relation to God, expressing itself in worship; and secondly, his relation to man, expressing itself in conduct.

With these two relations the narrative of Cain and Abel is concerned. In the simplicity, incisiveness, and comprehensiveness with which it treats the problems involved, the narrative is unsurpassed.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

I. The Historic Setting

Before taking up the narrative itself, it is important to note its setting.

(1) Have we here a historic account? The narrative is certainly realistic. Yet no more so than Christ's parable of the Prodigal Son or of Dives and Lazarus. I make this comparison, not to suggest that the narrative of Cain and Abel is parable, but for the purpose of again impressing the fact that the character of the narrative, although interesting, is comparatively unimportant; while its fitness for bringing life-lessons to the souls of men is all-important.

In the study of these narratives, however, we should now begin to gain an idea of the way early history was preserved. As all are aware, the Hebrews and Arabs are closely akin. In the early days, and in the shepherd life especially, their habits were similar. Around their camp-fires in the evening the Arabs to-day relate incidents in the lives of their heroes or any noted events in their history. This has been their custom for ages. In this way stories are repeated by parents to children from generation to generation. As always in such

Cain and Abel

repetition, unnecessary details are sifted out of the narratives, and the salient points emphasized, until in the fewest possible words the righteous act is approved, the heroism commended, or the sin denounced. When finally the story is put into writing it constitutes, not a detailed history, much less simply a parable, but a basis of historic fact, wrought over and over, condensed at one point, emphasized at another, and fashioned into the best possible medium for conveying truth. To be assured that such was the method of the Hebrews in preserving the most important events of their history, and of teaching them to their children, we have but to turn to the biblical record itself:

In speaking about the Passover service, God said to Moses: "When your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses" (Exod. 12:26). When Joshua led Israel across the Jordan into the promised land, God bade him command twelve men, from every tribe a man, to take stones

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

from the bed of the Jordan and pile them up for a memorial in the place where they should first lodge after crossing. The reason God gave for such a memorial was: "That this may be a sign among you, that, when your children ask in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? then ye shall say unto them, Because the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over the Jordan the waters of the Jordan were cut off" (Josh. 4:6f.). There is constant reference in the Old Testament to the habit of the fathers narrating to the children the important facts of their national history. Indeed, they were commanded not only to narrate them, but also to erect memorials to commemorate them.

In some such fashion, therefore, these early stories were doubtless handed down generation after generation, in some cases for many centuries, until an inspired prophet, seizing upon such as were suited to God's message, put them into permanent written form. Surely they are filled with the profoundest life-lessons that words can utter and bear the most-needed truths from the heart of God to the soul of man.

Cain and Abel

(2) In this narrative of Cain and Abel what may be called the background, though not of special importance, is very interesting. Cain, a tiller of the ground, and Abel, a keeper of sheep, dwell near each other. This fact is thought to locate the scene of the narrative in southern Palestine, where for centuries the two industries flourished side by side. The institution of sacrifice seems to be well developed, for there is no indication that in sacrificing the brothers are doing anything exceptional. The surrounding country is already filled with people whose vengeance Cain fears as he goes forth from his home. That blood-revenge is an existing institution is shown by Cain's fear that whosoever finds him will slay him. Cain is, therefore, afraid to go forth from the "presence of Jehovah," for, according to the ancient conception, each god had power to protect his worshipers only if they remained within his jurisdiction. The mark of protection placed upon Cain is thought to have been some tribal mark which laid every member of the tribe under obligations to protect him and avenge his injuries, thus warding off the stroke of the blood-avenger.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

Such is the setting of the story as derived from hints in the narrative itself.

2. Worship

(1) Some have thought that Abel's offering was accepted because it involved the shedding of blood, and also that this shedding of blood was prophetic of Christ. Every reference in the Old Testament to our Lord Jesus Christ has special sacredness to the writer of this book. But we do the Scriptures great wrong when we read back into them from later history what they do not contain or even contemplate.

Some still discuss the question as to whether the fact that Cain's sacrifice was bloodless constituted his fault. At no time in Israel's history is there an instance or an intimation of God's rejecting any offering because it did not involve the shedding of blood. On the other hand, the fruits of the field were offered side by side with slain animals and met with equal acceptance. Jewish legislation commands both kinds of offerings. The introduction into the Cain and Abel story of this question of the shedding of blood seems, therefore, utterly without warrant. The whole narrative is so

Cain and Abel

constructed that it is both natural and reasonable for Cain, the farmer, to present to God the fruits of the field ; while it is equally natural and reasonable for Abel, the shepherd, to present an offering from his flocks. Why should the writer of the narrative, who is charging Cain with fault, obscure by an uncertain phrase knowledge so vital to all worshipers? If the offering of the wrong sacrifice were Cain's fault, it was easy for the writer to indicate it plainly. Indeed, it is a fact worthy of commendation in the conduct of the brothers that each offers to God just what he has, and the narrative is so arranged as to put that fact strongly. Whether it was in the mind of the writer as a spiritual teaching, who shall say? The teaching is traceable throughout the Bible, though it is not specially connected with sacrifice.

(2) The great lesson upon which the narrative focuses attention is that Cain's offering was rejected on account of Cain's sin. The writer says specifically that if Cain had done "well," that is, had been righteous, his offering would have been accepted as readily as Abel's. The wording is, "If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

up?" There is no indication of what Cain's sin was, only that he did not do "well." But the particular sin is of no special significance. It is wholly a question of God accepting an offering in lieu of righteousness.

One is astonished to find in this early narrative a teaching that is the oft-recurring message of the prophets, the plain teachings of Christ, and the insistent claim of our own day, viz., that an unrepentant sinner cannot please God with offerings. Turning to Isaiah, we read: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: . . . Bring no more vain oblations" (Isa. 1:11, 13). Why are not the offerings of the people acceptable to God? Because the people are not right in life. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well" (Isa. 1:16). Even in the Apocrypha we read: "The sacrifice of a righteous man is acceptable; and the memorial thereof shall not be forgotten" (Sirach 35:7). Christ utters the same truth in these words: "If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy

Cain and Abel

brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift " (Matt. 5:23, 24). And no religious truth is more insisted upon to-day, not only by pulpit and pew, but also by the world at large, than that worship is vain unless the life is consistent therewith. It is significant of the inspired character of this narrative that its writer in dealing with worship, should pierce at once to the very heart of the subject and make clear a truth insisted upon by all the prophets, emphasized by Christ, and held as one of the most settled convictions of our century.

(3) Attention should be called to the fact that there is no mention of repentance in this narrative. The prophetic writer knows how to "stick to his text"; and, just as in the narrative of the temptation he drove straight on to show how God deals with the sinner, not complicating his theme with the question of repentance, so here, with like clearness, he shows God's attitude toward a sinner's worship. Writing in a day when sinners and saints alike offered sacrifices to some god, his purpose is evidently to contrast Jehovah's attitude

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

toward the worship of the righteous with his attitude toward the worship of the wicked. In this contrast the question of repentance, though not mentioned, is quite clear, for, from the character of God as shown in the narrative, it goes without saying that if Cain had come to God repentant his offering would have been accepted.

(4) One does not realize the great importance of this narrative, teaching as it does that sin renders worship unacceptable to God, until he calls to mind that heathen nations did not connect righteousness with worship. Indeed, much of their worship was positively immoral. In this narrative is begun the century-long struggle of the Hebrew prophets, in which they strove to secure the very thing that the sacred writer here insists upon, viz., to get righteousness connected with worship. Even in Christ's time the scribes and Pharisees, standing in long robes and broad phylacteries, made long prayers, which they thought were acceptable to God. Though they were the leaders of worship, Christ calls them robbers of widows and orphans and declares that the publicans and harlots enter the kingdom of God before them.

Cain and Abel

Throughout all the Christian centuries also, there have been ardent and enthusiastic worshipers, but much indifferent living. The linking together of the worship of God with righteousness of life has been an age-long struggle, a struggle which really holds within itself the whole problem of civilization. When we consider the depth and the difficulties of the problem, we marvel at the clearness with which it is set forth by the inspired writer in this early narrative.

(5) The story of Cain and Abel also makes clear without seeming effort what constitutes the normal and balanced life, the life that is well pleasing to God. It is not worship alone; nor yet "well-doing" alone; but both together. While God refuses to accept the worship of Cain because he has not "done well," one cannot imagine Jehovah saying to Abel, "Because you have done well you need not worship me." Worship is taken for granted in connection with well-doing.

This fact needs emphasis in our day. This narrative is right in its teaching that worship is vain without righteousness, and Christians should accept the criticism of

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the world at this point. But the narrative is equally right in what it takes for granted, that though a man does toward his brother as he would be done by, he is not therefore at liberty to ignore God and neglect worship.

3. *Social Relations*

We have seen how clearly this narrative sets forth man's right relation to God. Another relation which it makes clear—a twin relation to the first—is man's right relation to his brother man. Ours is the social century and we have many text-books on sociology, but the first statement on this subject is the story of Cain and Abel in the fourth chapter of Genesis. Its diagnosis of the social disease is accurate and the cure it prescribes is the only effective one. The disease—call it by whatever fine phrases we will—is that man is his brother's murderer. The murder may be physical, social, economic, or spiritual. John says that "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3: 15). The murderer is the man with the murderous spirit, the man who strikes down his brother in any sense or by any means whatsoever.

Cain and Abel

The cure which the narrative prescribes also is the only one, that man is his brother's keeper. It is not my purpose, however, to discuss sociology, but only to make clear the teaching of the narrative, in order that it may become evident that through it God is speaking to men.

In this narrative is found a complete catalogue of the soul movements observable in social wrong-doing—jealousy, deceit, the overt act, the lie to cover it up, and the denial of responsibility.

(1) Jealousy. Cain is jealous of Abel because Abel's offering meets with favor, while his own does not. Abel is a simple, God-fearing man, and not responsible for God's treatment of Cain; nor is he responsible for Cain's sin. It is only just that God should look with favor upon Abel's offering. But jealousy knows nothing of reason or justice. It is the first and most fundamental social sin. Man looks with jealous eyes upon his brother's success, and desires for himself what his brother possesses. With the social problem, therefore, the inspired writer begins at the beginning, for jealousy is the source whence all social discords spring.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(2) Deceit. And now, in seeming friendship, Cain invites Abel to walk with him in the field. "Let us go into the field" (as found in the Greek Bible), he says. Deceit is the first-born child of jealousy. Cain has a fair face, but a daggered hand. He is like one who presents to another's lips a sparkling but poisonous cup.

This element of Cain's sin assumes many forms in modern society. For example, you have a dollar that I covet, and so I put red gauze over my peaches to make you believe that they are just the peaches you want, when I know that they are green and sour. Or I send you the literature of a mine, "from which gold is just about to be shipped," when I am fully aware that there is no gold in the mine. Or I send you a patent medicine that "will cure all your ills," when I know perfectly well that the brandy in it will stimulate you for a little while and that afterward you will be worse than ever. Whatever the form, deceit is the first method of perpetrating social wrong between those of equal standing.

(3) The Overt Act. When by deceit Cain had led Abel into the field where there was

none to protect him and where he could strike him when off guard, he seized his advantage and slew him. This method of doing social wrong has not changed. For example, the brewer says to the saloon-keeper: "The nickels that you pay out for treats to the boys now will come back to you in dollars after a while." And when the boy has been deceived and his manhood slain, the dollars do come back—murderer's dollars, reeking with blood. Or the monopolist, with a smile, out of sheer generosity, as he would have you think, puts down the price of goods until he has crowded out his competitor, but when you are at his mercy he makes you pay double, and thus slays you inch by inch. If one visit our city tenements and ask, Why the overcrowding? Why the filth and disease? it will be discovered that the landlord has the tenant at his mercy and is committing the "overt act." Or if one inquire when the strike is called, he will learn that it is usually when the contractor is helpless and the public at the mercy of the strikers.

In the light of such facts of modern life, it is clear with what insight and accu-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

racy the inspired writer sets forth the method of social wrong-doing, and with what unqualified condemnation he brands it by designating it murder.

(4) The Lie to Hide the Wrong. "Where is thy brother?" Jehovah asks. "I know not," the murderer replies. It is only a step from deceit to an out-and-out lie, and a full commitment of one's self to the wrong. The narrative brings out with startling vividness how inevitably Cain rushes headlong from the less sin to the greater. The point is so clear and so true to life that one need not dwell upon it, for all know that whoever deliberately injures his fellow man will lie to defend himself or to cover up his wrong.

(5) Renunciation of Responsibility. In a single sentence the prophetic writer represents Cain both as lying to God about his brother and as disclaiming responsibility for him. In this renunciation of responsibility we come to the very heart of the social teaching of this narrative. Here is the writer's emphasis and climax. Here the narrative is stained crimson with the blood-guiltiness of Cain, and breathed through and through with the passion of

Cain and Abel

God. "Cain," it makes God say, "thou hast lied; I saw thee with thy brother; thou hast killed him; thou art responsible; his very blood has a voice, and crieth unto me from the ground, which henceforth to thee shall be barren."

Need one say that social wrong in all its forms is but another name for the renunciation of responsibility? Wherever one meets social injustice there he meets the question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" There he meets the vulgar motto, "Every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." There he meets that spirit which says, "I look out for number one, and every one else must do the same." All are but different expressions of the renunciation of responsibility for one's fellows.

And thus it becomes apparent that this narrative is sounding the social problem to its depths and settling it in the only way that it ever will or can be settled. Man must be his brother's keeper. But in order to be his brother's keeper he must first be right with God. Indeed, this narrative gives us in a life-picture what is equivalent to Christ's summing up of the law and the prophets: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

God with all thy heart, . . and thy neighbor as thyself " (Luke 10:27).

4. *Answerable to God*

The prophetic writer is not done, however, when he has made plain man's duty to his brother. For his treatment of his brother he must reckon with his God.

(1) It is significant that the narrative does not say, the voice of thy brother's blood crieth from the ground to you, Cain; but rather, "to me," Jehovah. When man has wronged his brother, he stops his ears to his brother's cries and the cry is vain. What cares the taskmaster for the cry of the slave? the brewer for the cry of homeless children? the stock-gambler for his ruined victims? Only as the cry comes to God and is taken up by men and women who fear God and love righteousness, men and women who hear as God hears, see as God sees, feel as God feels, and care as God cares,—men and women through whom God is doing his work in the world, has there ever been or will there ever be any righting of wrongs.

(2) At length the narrative brings the curse upon Cain, and we see him as he goes

Cain and Abel

forth into the land of Nod, the land of wandering. How remarkably true to history is this curse—to the history of Israel in bondage and exile, to the history of Greece in her wantonness, to the history of Rome in her brutality, to the history of Spain in her tyranny over the weak, to the history of every nation that has ignored the laws of God and the rights of men!

(3) Yet, it is not for man to take vengeance in kind. "Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold" (Gen. 4:15). Murder cannot be righted by murder nor deceit by deceit nor injury of any kind by injury of like kind. Christ has shown a better way and the only successful way: "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you" (Luke 6:27, 28).

(4) As in the temptation narrative Jehovah clothed the guilty pair with skins, so now he places the tribal mark upon the murderer. It is a mark of protection. Though Cain is guilty and unrepentant, Jehovah loves him, guards him, and provides for him. It is the marvel of marvels, but nevertheless the fact in the life of every

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

sinning man. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). By his goodness God would lead man to repentance, saying to him as in seeming sorrow he said to Cain: "If thou doest well, shall it not be lifted up? and if thou doest not well, sin coucheth at the door."

IV

The Great Flood

Genesis, Chapters Six to Eight

IV.

1. Flood Stories

NEARLY all nations that dwell beside the sea have traditions of a great flood. This is true of the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Greeks, Scythians, Peruvians, Mexicans, the aborigines of Cuba, the Indians of North America, the South Sea Islanders, and many others. Indeed, the only races that do not have such traditions are those living in Africa and in central and eastern Asia.

(1) Such wide-spread traditions certainly point to a common fact; to a flood so notable in character and extent that the report of it was related by parents to children generation after generation. It is by no means necessary to conclude that all such traditions reach back to a single event. Many catastrophes have overwhelmed now one seacoast and now another. Of this fact the Galveston flood is a modern ex-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

ample on a small scale. A sudden subsidence of land or an earthquake tidal wave, by overwhelming a city, valley, or island, might easily give rise to such a tradition among any people living near the sea.

(2) The scene of the Flood-narrative of the Bible is evidently located in the Euphrates Valley and is doubtless based on the memory of some great catastrophe which, owing to prolonged hurricane, land subsidence, or a tremendous tidal wave, caused the sea to sweep over that valley from side to side and from end to end, destroying cities and annihilating the inhabitants.

(3) The closest parallel to the biblical narrative is the Babylonian story of a flood. It is recorded on the clay tablets of the great Assyrian library, which was founded about the middle of the eighth century before Christ and has come to our knowledge through modern excavations. In these records there are two or more accounts of a flood, at least an earlier and a later one.

Scholars claim to find in the Bible also, an earlier and a later story of the flood woven together. They say that the earlier biblical account has its closest parallel in

The Great Flood

the earlier Babylonian account, while the later biblical narrative shows modifications similar to those in the later Babylonian story.

(4) The similarities and dissimilarities in the biblical and Babylonian accounts are as follows:

Similarities: *a.* To the hero in each account a special revelation is given to build an ark.

b. In each case the flood is caused by an extraordinary storm of rain.

c. Both animals and people are taken into the ark.

d. All men and animals outside of the ark are destroyed.

e. Seven is the favorite number.

f. Birds are sent out three times, and the last ones fail to return.

g. Upon coming out of the ark the hero offers a sacrifice to God, or the gods.

h. God, or the gods, smell the sweet savor of the sacrifice and are pleased.

i. Assurance is given that man will not again be destroyed by a flood.

Such similarities indicate that these accounts are related in some way to each other. But the differences are as marked and as significant as the similarities:

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

a. In the biblical account there is one God, while in the Babylonian there are many.

b. In the biblical account there is on the part of Jehovah a clearly defined and well-executed purpose, while in the Babylonian the gods deceive, quarrel, and are frightened.

c. In the biblical account Jehovah comes down to smell the sweet savor of the sacrifice and to accept the offering of Noah in a manner wholly dignified and worthy, while in the Babylonian account the gods swarm like flies about the sacrifice.

d. The biblical account gives sin as the cause of the catastrophe, while the Babylonian gives no cause other than the caprice of the gods.

e. The biblical story has a spiritual significance, while the Babylonian is wholly devoid of moral purpose.

(5) In the biblical narrative we should observe certain orientalisms. As we have formerly noted, God is represented as acting like a man. He "repents" that he has made man. He is "grieved at the heart." He "smells" the sweet savor of Noah's offering.

The Great Flood

The most perplexing of these orientalisms is that the sons of God are said to marry the daughters of men—evidently as many as they please—thus producing a race of giants. In the first chapter of the Flood-narrative this inter-marriage is given as a cause for the sinfulness of men.

In the oriental world it was not an uncommon belief that the traditional races of giants were produced by the union of demigods with men. The kings of Babylon traced their ancestry to the gods. In Greek mythology the Titans result from the marriage of the gods with men. "In his familiar dialogues Plato says: 'Do you not know that the heroes are demigods. All of them spring either from the love of a god for a mortal woman or of a mortal man for a goddess.'"¹ Herodotus says that the Egyptians were the only ones who did not hold that belief. It may seem strange to some that the inspired writer did not correct that error. But it is not strange. These narratives are all couched in the ideas of their own day, and they would have been useless otherwise. It did not come within the purpose of the prophetic writer,

¹ Kent, "Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History," p. 57.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

as we shall see, to discuss how men came to be sinful. That problem he left as he found it in the ideas of his times, for he was intent on a very different matter.

Our Lord pursued precisely the same method of teaching. He did not disturb, for example, the current notion that many diseases, such as epilepsy and insanity, were due to demoniacal possession. Since it was the custom of the people to drink wine, he turned water into wine, something which he surely would not do to-day. The outworn Jewish ideas and ceremonials he did not tear down. On the other hand, he made use of them, although he well knew that they would soon pass away. Christ often did things morally colorless to escape needless controversy and avoid giving needless offense, as when he sent Peter to take money from the fish's mouth for the temple tax, and the ten lepers to the priests to offer sacrifices for their cleansing. Just as any given parable of our Lord's does not teach at all points, but expresses some one truth in current language, so also these Old Testament narratives do not teach at all points, but express in current ideas some one great truth.

What then is the teaching of this Flood-

The Great Flood

narrative? What message does it bring from God to men? Recent excavations show that the flood story was current two thousand years before Christ.¹ The prophet, therefore, makes use of a story that had been in writing for hundreds of years. The only question of supreme importance is, What does he use it to teach?

2. *The Teaching*

(1) Getting the Key. If one enter a house by climbing through a window in the dark, and in doing so tip over a table and overturn some chairs, when he strikes a match all is in confusion. The best way to enter a house is to get a key and open the front door. Then when the electric button is pushed everything is seen to be in order. These great Bible narratives are houses built for spiritual homes, wherein we are to eat and drink and be made spiritually strong. The first thing necessary in studying any of them, therefore, is to get the key, viz., to discern the truth which the writer purposes to present; for this truth determines both the selection and arrangement of his materials. When one

¹ Skinner, "Genesis," p. 177, note.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

discerns the particular point upon which the prophet's emphasis rests, subsidiary questions fall away as unimportant and as incident to the ideas of the times.

(2) This Flood-narrative furnishes a notable example of the wisdom of entering by the door rather than through the window. For example, it might seem good exegesis to point to the sinful conditions existing just before the flood and hold that these conditions were an example of the ravaging nature of sin, which spreads like a disease until all are infected and doomed to destruction. This fact is true enough of sin, but upon it the emphasis of this narrative does not fall. The writer does not discuss the cause of sin, nor does he trace its development; but, on the other hand, he brings us suddenly and unexpectedly upon a society wholly corrupt, except for Noah and his family. The cause of sin, which is stated only incidentally, is that familiar to the ideas of the times, viz., that the sons of God married the daughters of men. Upon this fact, however, no emphasis is placed. Had the author's emphasis been upon the cause of sin and were he seeking to eradicate that cause, it would

The Great Flood

have been much more to his purpose to exhibit some method of keeping the sons of God at home than to exhibit the men they had sinned against overwhelmed in a flood.

(3) But, as with every good writer, the prophet's emphasis makes clear his purpose. He brings us suddenly upon a world filled with sinners. The impression we receive is that of confusion and license in which sin runs riot. Then, over against a world filled with abandoned sinners he places Noah, the righteous man, the man who finds favor in the eyes of Jehovah. In this sharp contrast lies the teaching of the Flood-narrative. Two things are made clear: First, that God's attitude toward the sinful is different from his attitude toward the righteous; and secondly, that the destiny of the sinful is different from the destiny of the righteous.

3. *God's Attitudes*

(1) In the first part of the narrative it is made clear that God is for the righteous and against the wicked. Jehovah is shown to be displeased and grieved at heart with sinners. Because of man's sin he repents that he has made man. Because there is no

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

hope of reform he plans man's destruction. That is, Jehovah is against sinners.

On the other hand, Noah is found righteous. With him, therefore, God is well pleased and, because well pleased, he plans to rescue him from the general destruction. In accordance with this plan, God lets Noah into his secret, bids him build an ark, gives him careful instructions, and rescues him and his family alive while all others perish. How could any writer more forcefully impress the fact that Jehovah is for the righteous?

(2) In this fact, that God is against the wicked and for the righteous, we reach the very core of religion. This is the central truth which the Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, labors to teach. The Bible's insistent and ever-recurring message is that God places a fundamental difference between sin and righteousness and that his attitude toward the one is wholly different from his attitude toward the other. What is the teaching of the Jewish sacrificial system, with its purgings, sin-offerings, sprinklings, purifyings, and washings? Simply that God is holy and that in order to be well pleasing to him one must put away

The Great Flood

sin. What was the significance of the architecture of the temple, its outer courts, its holy place, and its holy of holies? Was it not that God was separating the sinful from the righteous? This also was the continuous message of the prophets. They declared that sin had separated the people from their God; that sin was the cause of the nation's captivity; that sin had made their crops to fail, their vineyards to be blasted, and their children to be slain. "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith Jehovah of hosts," cried the prophets. (Zech. 1:3; Mal. 3:7.) But as long as the people clung to their sin Jehovah was against them. This is the great truth that rings clear in the message of John the Baptist. "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2). God wants to bring the kingdom speedily, but it must be founded in righteousness and a turning to God must prepare the way for it. This also is the teaching of Christ. When the Father said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17), he said it of one who knew no sin. Christ came to redeem men from sin in order that they might

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

be reconciled to God. As long as man persists in sin there is no reconciliation. God is against sin. The life of the sinless Christ, the teaching of Christ, and the preaching of the apostles—all are a setting-forth of this basal fact, that God is against sin and for righteousness.

(3) Need one say that the moral and spiritual weakness of our times lies in the fact that our constant emphasis upon the fatherhood of God and upon the love of our heavenly Father has led many by subtle and imperceptible stages to think that God is indifferent to sin, and that there is not so much difference after all between the sinning man and the righteous man. I would lead the reader back through the centuries of Christian history, which show God's blessings upon the righteous; through the preaching of the apostles; through the life and teachings of Christ; through the centuries of prophetic teaching and Jewish sacrifices to the story of the flood, not for its historic significance, but because the Spirit of the Eternal God bade his prophet use the incident to make clear to men that Jehovah makes an eternal difference between righteousness and sin, that he looks

The Great Flood

upon the one with favor and upon the other with unsparing condemnation.

4. *Final Destiny*

The second fact which the Flood-narrative makes clear is the final destiny of the righteous and the wicked. The righteous were saved and the wicked destroyed.

(1) Until we reach the account of the flood there is in the Bible narratives no destruction of the wicked. Adam and Eve were simply driven out of the garden, and even while being driven out they were mercifully clothed with skins. Cain was simply driven from the face of Jehovah, that is, according to the ideas of the times, from the protection of Jehovah; but in sending him forth Jehovah placed upon him a mark of protection in order that he might not be slain. In the case of both Adam and Cain, however, we see sin only in its beginnings. But in the Flood-narrative we come suddenly upon sin after it has run its course and done its work. All hope, except in the case of Noah and his family, is at an end.

(2) When we consider that in the whole Old Testament there is practically no teach-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

ing about the hereafter; that there are only the merest adumbrations of heaven and hell; that, doubtless owing to the limited spiritual capacity of the people, practically all rewards and punishments were set forth as physical and temporal, we begin to discern the significance and the mighty force of this Flood-narrative for the spiritual teaching of the times.

Not until Christ's time is the fact of eternal life made certain and its significance plain. That Hebrew thought concerned itself most of all with physical good and evil, temporal rewards and punishments, appears on every page of the Old Testament. Abraham, because righteous, was promised a goodly land and descendants as numerous as the stars. Before the destruction of Sodom Abraham inquired of God, "Wilt thou consume the righteous with the wicked?" (Gen. 18:23.) That the righteous and the wicked should meet the same physical fate seemed to Abraham utterly wrong. God said to Moses at Sinai when the Israelites made the golden calf, "Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them" (Exod. 32:10). It was to be a physical destruction. Indeed, the re-

The Great Flood

ward that for centuries glowed before the imagination of the children of Israel was the physical reward of the promised land.

Throughout the Psalms the punishment implored to fall upon enemies, who were always thought of as sinners against Jehovah, was that they might be defeated in battle, a physical punishment. On the other hand, when Israel was defeated in battle and carried into captivity, the prophets declared that the physical calamity was on account of Israel's sin. And thus everywhere in the Old Testament rewards for righteousness and punishments for sin are represented as physical.

Among all the writings of the Old Testament there is not another which makes the final destiny of the righteous and the wicked so unmistakable, which sets it forth in a manner so unforgettable, and which leaves such an indelible impress upon the mind as does this Flood-narrative.

(3) Christ teaches that he is the fulfilment of the law and the prophets; and, true to his claim, he carries the lesson of the flood forward from physical to spiritual destiny, from temporal to eternal rewards and punishments.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

It is not without significance that our Lord's representations of the punishments of the wicked are even more terrible than those of the flood—the worm that never dies, the fire that is never quenched, the seething lake of fire and brimstone. In the New Testament these representations are the outstanding and unforgettable punishments of the wicked, as the destructive flood is in the Old Testament. And Christ himself refers both to the flood and to the fiery destruction of Sodom in connection with the doom of the wicked in the “day that the Son of man is revealed” (Luke 17:26f.).

Such strong representations are imperative when one considers that the punishment and loss of the wicked are what make redemption necessary, and that the difference in destiny of righteous and wicked is the fact on which redemption is based. Unless the sinning man is a lost man, Christ's life is shorn of its chief significance and his death on the cross of its main objective. Nowhere in the Old Testament is there a better and stronger putting of this fundamental difference which God makes between righteous and wicked than is found in the great Flood-narrative.

v

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

Genesis, Chapters Twelve to Twenty-two

V

1. The Character of the History

THE story of Abraham, beginning in the twelfth chapter of Genesis, introduces us to the most clearly defined historic situation that we have yet met in our study of early Bible narratives.

(1) To Abraham the Jews traced the origin of their history. Jehovah they addressed as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Referring to this fact of origin, Paul says that not those who were the natural seed of Abraham were his true children, but rather those who had the faith of Abraham; and referring to the same fact, Christ affirmed that God was able even from stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

(2) But although we feel ourselves on safer ground than heretofore, it is of the utmost importance for us to understand the character of the history.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

a. First of all, it is *sifted history*. In former chapters reference was made to the fact that when history is not written on the spot—and the best history is never thus written—but handed down as tradition from generation to generation, the facts irrelevant to the main theme fall away, while the marked incidents and the significant facts emerge into correspondingly greater prominence, until they are the only things that remain.

The most cursory examination of Abraham's history will show it to be made up of a small number of intensely interesting and significant events, each of which, from a purely literary standpoint, is practically complete in itself. Questions of detail are omitted. There are no answers to such questions as, How did God communicate with Abraham? What were the incidents of the journey to Canaan? How long was he on the way? What sort of reception did he receive in the new land? and many others. Evidently the narrative never was intended to give detailed history.

b. It may well be believed also that the history of Abraham and his successors is *selected history*, that is, history made up

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

of incidents selected from many unrecorded events, and for the distinct purpose of teaching spiritual truth. It scarcely need be said that to give a detailed history of Abraham's life would require not a meager ten chapters, but a volume.

In the historical portions of the New Testament this selective compression of narrative is very prominent. Indeed, it is the prevailing method of writing. John says that if all the things that Christ did were recorded, he presumes the world itself would not be able to contain all the books that should be written. (John 21:25.) Each of the Gospel writers condenses whole days of miracle-working into single sentences. And in Paul's life there are years at a time of which practically nothing is recorded.

c. This selective process in Abraham's history is doubtless governed by a *spiritual purpose*, just as it is in the Gospels. John announces the purpose of writing his Gospel in the following words: "These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

From the character of Abraham's history it is clear that the same method was followed, and followed for the same purpose,—a selective method, for the purpose, not so much of narrating history as of uttering spiritual truth by presenting a man in action. The inspired writer gives such incidents of Abraham's life as exhibit and illustrate those qualities of character and conduct which should inhere in and be exhibited by the "Chosen People" and by the people of God in all time.

It is important to observe that this selective process is above all others the one for which inspiration is required and revelation imperative. We say truly that the Bible is a revelation of God and is inspired by the Holy Spirit. But it requires neither inspiration nor revelation to record ordinary everyday history. Any one able to write, and with intelligence, can do that. On the other hand, to see as Abraham saw and do as Abraham did requires revelation. And to sift out of Abraham's life the things that are God-revealed and God-inspired and put them into the best form for the teaching of mankind, requires the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

2. *Several Narratives*

(1) Scholars tell us that the history of Abraham as it stands in the Bible is made up of several narratives woven together. These narratives they have separated and placed in columns side by side, as the different lives of Christ are placed side by side in a harmony of the Gospels. Indeed, the well-known character of the Gospels furnishes the best illustration of what scholars claim to be the character of much of the Old Testament history. Of the Gospels the following facts are well known:

a. We have not one history of Christ, but four.

b. Each Gospel historian writes from his own angle of view. In John's Gospel, for example, there is more of the mystical than in either of the others. On account of his mystical turn of mind, John selects out of all the teachings of Christ his most mystical sayings.

c. Each Gospel historian writes for a certain class, and embodies in his Gospel what will most effectively appeal to his readers. Matthew, who writes for Jews, places his emphasis on the fulfilment of prophecy,

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

which was convincing to Jews; while Mark, who writes for Gentiles, places his emphasis on miracles, which were convincing to Gentiles.

d. Each of the Gospel writers, while duplicating in some respect the others, has material peculiar to himself.

e. As Luke states in his preface, his Gospel was composed with earlier accounts before him.

f. At several times during Christian history the four Gospels have been woven together into a consecutive account of Christ's life, and the impression of such an account is exceedingly powerful.

If now the separate Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John should be lost and scholars should undertake to separate this interwoven record into its four original parts, they would be undertaking to do for the New Testament history precisely what scholars have undertaken to do for the Old Testament history.

(2) Many scholars affirm that as many as four histories of Abraham have been joined together in the Bible narrative; that some of these were written by prophets and others by priests; and that they bear

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

different dates. After separating these accounts they claim to find to be true of them what is true of the Gospels:

a. Each author writes from his own view-point, the prophet setting forth spiritual truth and dwelling little upon historic details; while the priest is zealous for whatever pertains to his priestly office.

b. Accounts are found to vary according to the times and conditions in which they were written, since at different times both the people and their needs were different.

c. Each writer has material peculiar to himself. For example, Abraham's rescue of Lot and his deception of Pharaoh in regard to his wife do not occur in the earlier narratives.

(3) The results of the combination of these Old Testament narratives are precisely the same as the results of combining the Gospel narratives:

a. There is some reduplication—a common fact in the Old Testament.

b. On account of the mixed materials originally written for different purposes there is sometimes manifest confusion of purpose.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

c. Different parts of narratives are of unequal value for spiritual instruction, since the facts which they set forth are of unequal importance.

3. *The Early Prophetic Narratives*

(1) With so much of explanation let us now consider those incidents in Abraham's life recorded by the early prophets of the Hebrew people. They comprise: *a.* The call of Abraham and his journey to Canaan. *b.* The separation of Abraham from Lot. *c.* The destruction of Sodom. *d.* The promise to Abraham of the birth of Isaac. *e.* The expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael. *f.* The birth and sacrifice of Isaac.

(2) For the purposes of teaching, these incidents may be reduced to three. The destruction of Sodom simply emphasizes the folly of Lot in choosing the beautiful valley with the wicked city. The teaching import of the incident, therefore, is a constituent part of the lesson taught by the separation of Abraham and Lot. The foretelling of Isaac's birth emphasizes the desire of Abraham for a son and heir; and the expulsion of Hagar and Ishmael emphasizes the affection of Abraham and

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

Sarah for Isaac. Both incidents, therefore, simply set out in strong relief Abraham's incomparable renunciation in the sacrifice of Isaac.

This leaves us three clear, strong, and commanding incidents, which embody three calls to Abraham. First, the call to leave his home and go forth, "not knowing whither he went"; secondly, the call to give Lot his choice of the best pastures, upon which seemingly his own worldly success depended; and thirdly, the call to sacrifice Isaac, for whom he had so deeply yearned, so long prayed, and who now was his only visible hope for the future.

4. *Spiritual Teaching*

(1) In these three calls of God to Abraham there is one central lesson, a lesson which stirs the soul with increasing power as one passes from call to call, until the great climax is reached in the sacrifice of Isaac.

It is hard to leave home; but harder still, after having left home in the hope of bettering one's fortune, to relinquish to another the best of one's worldly prospects; and unspeakably harder than either is it to

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

sacrifice on the altar one's only child, especially when that child has been the object of the prayers of a lifetime and is the only visible hope of all that is dearest in the future.

In these three calls of Jehovah to Abraham the fundamental fact is the exhibition of *a man obeying God*, a man not inquiring the reason, not shirking the cost, not complaining of the requirement, but obeying. On the basis of such obedience his very name was changed from Abram to Abraham, because on the basis of such obedience he was to be made a world-wide blessing, the father of a spiritual multitude.

Such an exhibition reveals the heart of religion, for obedience is faith in action, the evidence of love, and the badge of loyalty. Obedience to Jehovah was what made Abraham the father of the faithful, the progenitor of a chosen people, the founder of a spiritual seed. Because Abraham was obedient God could promise him: "I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing: . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:2, 3).

The fundamental character of obedience

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

is shown by our Lord when in talking to the disobedient Jews, who claimed to be Abraham's seed, he said, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham" (John 8:39). That is, ye would obey God. Because Christ himself was obedient the Spirit said to him, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11). Indeed, Christ made the excellency of his own life obedience when he said: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work" (John 4:34). In obedience lay Christ's supreme victory when in Gethsemane he prayed, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39). Obedience! That is the one thing in every life which renders it well pleasing to God, and enables God to say, "I will bless thee and make thee a blessing."

(2) This fundamental teaching will appear in greater fulness as we note carefully its different elements:

a. God called Abraham. Nothing is said as to the method of the call. Did God speak from heaven in an audible voice? Did he send an angel? Did he speak to Abraham's conscience by strong impression

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

of duty? In regard to such things nothing is indicated.

When Abraham and Lot separated, it is not specially mentioned that God called Abraham to be so generous. Their herdsmen were quarreling over pastures and water. That this was an unseemly thing between brethren Abraham did not question. To his nephew he said: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdsmen and thy herdsmen" (Gen. 13:8). As far as the record shows, we see here a man simply acting in a worldly matter from a high sense of honor. Abraham did not claim all his rights, but acted the part of a high-minded, noble man. Who can doubt God's call to such action?

It seems strange to us that God should call Abraham to sacrifice Isaac upon the altar. But, as formerly noted, these narratives lie imbedded in the ideas of their day. And in ancient times human sacrifices were not uncommon among many peoples. That the Hebrews did not think such sacrifices wrong, but sometimes a duty, is attested by the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter. And whatever the circumstances in

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

Isaac's case, none of the details of which are given, Abraham believed that it was his duty to sacrifice his son, and there was no hesitancy in performance. Moreover, when God stayed Abraham's hand from slaying Isaac and pointed him to a ram caught in a thicket, a step was taken from human sacrifice to the sacrifice of animals. The only question with Abraham was, "Does God call me?" His immediate and unquestioning obedience was the foundation of his religious character. And nowhere in the Old Testament is the duty and the beauty of obedience set forth with so much persuasiveness and charm as in this incident.

God calls every one as truly as he called Abraham and, for aught we know, in the same way. God convicts of sin, makes duty plain, shows the path of righteousness and honor, brings us to the place where we know assuredly what his will is. Our answer is the response of our character to God's character, and we become like him in character only as we are obedient.

b. Abraham had supreme regard for the spiritual. The writer to the Hebrews says that in leaving his home Abraham "looked

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10). However we interpret this sentence, that to which it points is certainly spiritual, a city that God is building. This, rather than material things, was what the Pilgrim Fathers were seeking. They desired homes, farms, cattle, riches; but something else they desired more than they desired these. Their supreme aim was a city that hath foundation, a city where should be found righteous men, freedom, charity, honor, truth—foundations these of permanent character and permanent society. This as yet unseen but permanent city, God was building by their hands in America, even as he laid its deeper foundations by the hands of Abraham of old.

In his relation to Lot Abraham preferred peace and brotherly love to more pastures, more sheep, more cattle, more wells of water, and strife and contention therewith. In a word, he placed the spiritual first, preferring righteousness to material prosperity. When he went into the mountain to build the altar and sacrifice his son, he was simply laying all his most cherished hopes for this world upon the altar of his convictions.

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

What does it mean for one to prefer the spiritual? Surely not simply to pray, read the Bible, and attend church. These are helps to the spiritual. Preference for the spiritual is preference for righteousness. It is to prefer the truth to the temporary advantage of a lie; justice to the gain of injustice; noble conduct to the worldly gain of ignoble conduct; the manhood which obeys the law to dollars earned by breaking the law.

The test of character is the same for us as it was for Abraham. Only those who prefer spiritual excellencies to worldly advantage can God bless and make a blessing, and only such hold the promise of the future. Their spiritual progeny are to be like the stars of heaven and like the sands of the seashore for multitude. The promise that God will bless Abraham and make him a blessing is a prophecy as well as a promise for Abraham's day, which receives more comprehensive utterance in the words of John: "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15).

c. Abraham never hesitated to *pay what it cost* to obey God.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

In Jacob we shall see a struggle. In Moses we shall witness objections and excuses. But in Abraham everything but instant and implicit obedience drops out of sight. He leaves his home without a murmur, gives the best pastures to Lot without an objection, proceeds to sacrifice Isaac without a protest. The cost of obedience he never counted. God's commands he never questioned.

The fundamental character of such a teaching is evident from the way it touches every human heart, for it strikes deep into the weakness of every son of Adam. We are ever counting the cost of obedience, complaining of what we have to relinquish, and finding righteousness too expensive. We forget that this is downright skepticism, indeed, that it is a positive form of infidelity. We forget that in counting the cost we are distrusting God, and setting our own short-sighted judgment in opposition to his judgment. We forget that counting the cost in a grudging way is rebellion against the divine will. Abraham believed God, and trusted him, and therefore the cost of obedience was never counted.

Abraham, the Man who Obeyed God

(3) The inevitable conclusion to which the life of Abraham leads is that it pays to obey God.

a. This fact is made immediately evident in the choice of Lot. He coveted the rich and well-watered valley of the Jordan, not regarding the wickedness of Sodom. The narrative leaves the wicked city enveloped in lurid flames and Lot fleeing from the valley to the mountains, having lost his wife and having left behind all his flocks and herds; whereas Abraham is seen dying in a good old age and leaving a goodly inheritance to Isaac, through whom God's promises for the future are to be realized.

b. As a matter of historic fact God's promise to Abraham, that he should possess the land, was literally fulfilled; for in the time of David and Solomon one, standing upon the very mountain where God made the promise to the "father of the faithful," could have looked eastward, westward, northward, southward, upon hills and valleys every one of which was in possession of Abraham's descendants and was ruled over by the King of Israel.

But the promise to Abraham has a larger fulfilment. As Paul teaches, those who are

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

of the faith of Abraham are the children of the promise. (Rom. 4: 16.) And to-day, as all are aware, the Christian nations possess the gardens of the earth and the granaries of the world. They control the world's commerce and are the heirs of its wealth.

c. God's promise to Abraham of the multiplied seed has been even more signally fulfilled than that of multiplied possessions. One need not trace the history of the Hebrews until in Christ's time Israel's sons are in every large city; nor need one point out the fact that to-day they are citizens of every land and nation. It is of greater significance to point to the larger interpretation of the promise in Jesus Christ and to recognize that the spiritual seed of Abraham is to-day in numbers like the stars of heaven and like the sand that is beside the seashore for multitude. And it is of still greater moment to remember that through all the centuries God has blessed this spiritual seed and made it a blessing and, as was promised, in Abraham all the nations of the earth *have been blessed*. It pays to obey God.

VII

**Jacob, the Man who Conquered
by Being Conquered**

Genesis, Chapters Twenty-seven to Thirty-three

VI

1. Jacob's Life

JACOB and Esau were twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Esau became "a cunning hunter," while Jacob was "a plain man, dwelling in tents."

(1) When these twin brothers were grown, Esau returned one day from hunting and found Jacob 'preparing pottage. Being faint from hunger, he asked his brother for a portion of the food. Jacob, discerning the opportunity for which he had been watching, replied that he would exchange his pottage for Esau's birthright. The bargain was soon concluded and the meal eaten. Just what the birthright signified at this time is not stated. In later times it came to embrace (*a*) a double portion of goods, (*b*) the headship of the tribe, and (*c*) the priestly office in the family.

(2) When Isaac was about to die he called his favorite son, Esau, bade him take

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

his bow and arrows, and go to the field for game. The game, when secured, he was instructed to prepare as his father liked it best, after which he was to receive his father's blessing.

Rebekah, overhearing Isaac's instructions to Esau, hastily called her favorite son, Jacob, told him what she had heard, and bade him go immediately to the flock and fetch two kids of the goats. These she skilfully prepared to taste like venison. Then, since Esau was a hairy man, she clothed Jacob in hairy garments, and sent him with the savory dish to his father, meanwhile instructing him to pretend that he was Esau. Jacob was afraid that he would be discovered and incur his father's curse, but the insistent mother said, "Upon me be thy curse, my son; only obey my voice" (Gen. 27:13). The deception was successful, and Jacob received the fatherly blessing intended for Esau. When Esau returned from the field and learned what had been done, he cried in anger and resolved that when his father was dead he would kill Jacob.

(3) Rebekah, learning of Esau's threat to kill his brother, complained to Isaac that

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

her life was filled with sorrow on account of Esau's marriages with women of the Canaanites, and requested Isaac to send Jacob to her father's home at Haran, where her brother Laban lived, in order that Jacob might secure one of his daughters for a wife. "If Jacob," said she, "take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?" (Gen. 27:46.) At the request of Rebekah, Isaac sent Jacob to the home of Laban. He did not know, however, that as Jacob went he fled for his life from the enraged Esau.

Arriving at Bethel weary, Jacob pillowed his head upon a stone and slept. But God spoke to him in dreams, and he awoke in a fright, for he thought he had got away from God. In surprise he said: "Surely Jehovah is in this place. . . How dreadful is this place! . . the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:16, 17). Then Jacob bargained, agreeing that if prospered he would serve Jehovah. And having registered this vow, he hastened eastward to the home of his mother's brother.

In Bible narratives the wells where flocks were watered were often fraught with

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

destiny. At a well the servant of Abraham found Rebekah, whom he brought to the tent of his master to be Isaac's wife. At a well in the southern wilderness Moses defended the priest's daughters against the rudeness of the shepherds, and finally married one of them. So, also, it happened to Jacob. At the well where Laban's flocks were watered he met Rachel and, after fourteen years, she became his wife. The beautiful story of their courtship and marriage is a long one, running through several chapters. Seven years Jacob served for her sister, Leah, and afterward seven other years for Rachel. Meanwhile, by shrewd trickery, he became possessed of large flocks and herds, and finally, owing to Laban's dissatisfaction with his methods, was compelled to flee. He was now like one between the devil and the deep sea. He could not turn back to Laban, whom he had tricked, and he was afraid to go forward to Esau, whom he had wronged.

(4) As Jacob journeyed toward his old home in Canaan, Esau came to meet him with four hundred men. Surely now, he thought, the penalty must be paid for stealing Esau's blessing. His wits, how-

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

ever, did not desert him. His flocks and servants he divided into two bands, planning that if Esau captured one, the other at least would be left him. At evening, after placing his wives and children across the brook Jabbok, he returned to spend the night alone, alone with God. All that night, even till the break of day, Jacob wrestled with an unnamed stranger. No one need tell us that there was wrestling that night. Every one knows what takes place when a sinning man in his extremity spends the night alone with his God. After that night of wrestling Jacob was called Israel, the contender with God, the wrestler against God.

That struggle in the dark presents a weird picture to the imagination, and if we interpret it literally, we are in no little confusion as to whom belonged the victory. Jacob was wrestling with unflinching determination, and seemed about to prevail when the unknown antagonist simply touched the hollow of his thigh and he was disabled, and afterward lay clinging to his conqueror pleading, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." After the mysterious wrestler blessed him we are astonished to

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

have it said that this conquered and prostrate cripple "prevailed." But so it was. When Jacob, conquered and prostrate, said to his conqueror, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Gen. 32:26), that was the hour of his victory. Jacob conquered by being conquered. He conquered himself when he was conquered of God. That is the condition of self-conquest for every man, and there is no other. The issue of this wrestle is the climax of the Jacob narrative, and its teaching is evident, a teaching for individuals and for nations and for all time. The man who conquers is the man whom God conquers, and the man who defeats God defeats himself.

2. Elements of the narrative

In the light of this crucial struggle all else in this narrative finds luminous interpretation.

(1) Look now at the character of these brothers. Esau was an easy-going, hale fellow. He lived for the pleasure of the passing day. Having no regard for family traditions or hopes, he married women of other nations. Lacking in spirituality, the religion of his own people was no more to

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

him than the idolatry of the Canaanites. Indeed, when he established his home, religion did not enter into the consideration. Because he was the oldest son, to him belonged the birthright, which among the Hebrews gave a man opportunity and put into his hands the power to mold the future of his people. Yet Esau sold this inestimable inheritance for a mess of pottage. What an animal sort of man he was, that he could not endure hunger! History counts men by the score who, though compelled to live on crusts, never flinched from the pursuit of life's divine purpose. But here is a man of animal appetites. With him all great opportunities and high prospects melt into insignificance before physical hunger. Not only in the literature of the Bible itself, but in the literature of all time, Esau stands forth as the animal man placed over against the spiritual man, as the man who lived for the day and the present satisfaction placed over against the man who makes himself the master of his life, and who directs life's endeavors toward worthy ends. We are dealing here with more than an individual. We are dealing with a type, a type which the prophet

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

sets before the eyes of all the world as an example of supreme folly.

(2) Jacob is a type of precisely opposite character. The contrast is emphasized by the fact that Jacob and Esau are twins and that even in birth Jacob showed a disposition to supplant his brother.

We have already seen that Bible history is sifted history and selected history. All history used for purposes of teaching is also more or less *idealized history*. One cannot imagine a stronger contrast than twins of such diametrically opposite character as Jacob and Esau. They seem to be set forth not only as individuals, but as types that stand for two great and distinct classes which have ever been in the world and are in the world to-day. They point to the animalism of the one and the spiritual aspirations of the other.

The prophetic writer shows his insight not only into human nature, but also into the ways of God, when for the purposes of teaching he selects not those incidents in Jacob's life which show him a saint, if indeed such could be found, but those incidents which show him a sinner, and a wilful and deliberate sinner, as shown by the

Jacob. the Man who Conquered

following facts: When Jacob defrauded Esau of his father's blessing he said to his mother that if he were caught in his deception his father would curse him as a deceiver, and he knew that the curse would be merited. In his guilt he fled from his brother and, as he thought, from God. Because of trickery and deceit he had to flee also from Laban. And as he turned his face toward home, though it was twenty years afterward, his guilty conscience smote him for the wrong he had done Esau. Jacob's conduct cannot be justified on any ground of oriental ideas or morals. And in the narrative itself there is no effort to justify it; but, on the other hand, a laying bare of the sins of this wrestler against God without palliation or excuse.

In spite of his sins, however, Jacob had spiritual aspirations. He wanted the blessing of the first-born and ran the risk of his father's curse to secure it. He wanted God's blessing, though he thought to gain it by bargaining. Not only did Jacob have spiritual aspirations, but he had resolution and determination as well. In a word, there was something in Jacob on which God could build.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(3) As one reads the narrative of these twin brothers he instinctively takes the part of Esau. Our hearts are naturally chivalrous, and we espouse the cause of the one who is wronged. Beyond question, Esau was wronged. We are surprised that God seems to bless Jacob, the wrong-doer, more than Esau. But if we read the narrative again with our eyes upon this particular point we shall see that God did not bless Jacob more than Esau. Esau is shown to be blessed with so many flocks that he refused to accept the present that Jacob proffered him upon the occasion of their meeting saying to him that he already had enough. Esau was blessed with all worldly blessings, and these were the only blessings to which he aspired, the only ones that he was capable of appreciating or utilizing.

When the prophetic writer has made plain the characters of these twin brothers he simply dismisses Esau from his narrative, except that he traces to him the Edomites. His life the author does not follow as he does Jacob's, for his purpose is to show God's struggle with a sinner who has spiritual aspirations. It would be profitless to follow Esau's life. In him there is noth-

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

ing to build a spiritual future upon. Shall a father send to school a son who refuses education? or set up in business a son who is too shiftless to do business? How shall God build a spiritual future upon one who lives for the pleasure of the present? The discernment as well as the purpose of the writer is shown in that he dismisses the easy-going Esau from his narrative and follows the aspiring sinner Jacob.

(4) Does it seem strange to us that God follows and seeks to guide and bless a sinner like Jacob? Yet God is continually doing this. He does not abandon the sinning man. He makes his rain to fall on just and unjust, and often we see a sinner flourishing "like a green bay tree." When we were enemies against God Christ died for us. The voice of God is in the soul of every sinning man and calls him to the highest of which he is capable. The Spirit seeks to lead the sinning man into the paths of obedience, and on the basis of obedience God builds the man's future and marks out his service and his destiny. God's ways with Jacob, therefore, are typical of his ways with all men.

(5) It should be said in passing that

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

these typical men, Jacob and Esau, doubtless have a national significance. Not only was Esau the father of the Edomites, but also typical of the Edomites, and the Edomites were in a sense typical of idolatrous nations. History shows abundantly that in idolatrous nations there has not been that keen sense of God, that splendid aspiration for higher things, that hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and that persistent climbing to diviner heights, which have characterized either the natural or spiritual seed of Israel.

On the other hand, Jacob is a perfect type of the nation which sprang from his loins. In all of its history that nation has been characterized by Jacob's qualities of character: The same regard for the future, the same high aspiration, the same shrewdness in dealing, the same endeavor to wrest God's blessings from his hands without following divine methods, the same long, hard struggle with God before being conquered by God.

Is not Jacob typical also of the "spiritual seed"? What a wrestling against God there has been in all the Christian centuries! What a difficult task it has been

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

for God thoroughly to subdue even Christians to himself! The church of Jesus Christ can indeed say that it has had noble aspirations, but every century has seen the lopping off of some sin. Only gradually is the church conquering by being conquered of God. World types these twin brothers are, both of individuals and of nations, types even of world movements that lie deeper than national life and overstep all national bounds.

(6) How could a man with Jacob's methods—methods of deceit, trickery, and fraud—entertain such high aspirations? We should expect the one to exclude the other. We may answer by asking a larger question. In Christ's time how could the scribes and Pharisees, who had become hypocrites—outwardly fair enough, but inwardly like "putrid sepulchers"—continue to look for the Christ and aspire to the spiritual leadership of the world? It is one of the strangest mysteries of life that for a time spiritual aspirations can dwell together with evil practices. But there comes an hour, and it is the crucial hour of life, when God struggles with a man, and he is either conquered by God and the evil of his life put

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

away, or the spiritual aspiration, however long it may linger as a dream, ceases to be a power in his life. The sin must go or the best that is in the man must perish. If the sin remain, it drags the man down. If God conquers, the man conquers and enters upon an enlarging future wherein the best in his life is brought to its flower and fruitage.

As a nation the Jews came to their supreme testing-time in dealing with Jesus Christ. They crucified him, and from that hour their spiritual aspirations have been waning, their consciousness of a mission in the world has been fading out, and the door of the future, instead of opening to enlarged national life, is closing ever more inevitably upon them.

Jacob came to his crisis in that all-night struggle with God at the Jabbok. His methods of life must change or his aspirations are vain. The first must go or the second must fade out. He must be conquered of God or he is a defeated man. But the wrestler against God submitted at last, and by submitting prevailed. From that crucial night Jacob was a different man. There is found in him no more of the old

Jacob, the Man who Conquered

methods; but, on the other hand, he became truly a prince of God.

(7) We are not different from Jacob. Years ago I knew a young man who had various methods of cheating the railroads, so that he traveled for nothing. He was a professing Christian, yet this practice went on for some years, strange excuses being found to salve his conscience. But there came a time when the dishonest practice had to be put out of his life or he had to cease aspiring to be a Christian. The strange fact is that even for a time the evil practice and the noble aspiration could dwell together in the same person, but they did.

I knew another young man of good home and Christian parents who was converted early in life and began studying for the ministry. After a time he became careless of his religion and fell into evil ways. Yet, not for a moment did he relinquish his purpose of living a Christian life nor of entering the ministry. But there came a time of struggle with God, when the evil had to be put away or his aspiration relinquished and his purpose abandoned. Happily, his wrestle resulted like Jacob's and his life was one of great usefulness.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

The noble aspiration and the sinful life, with God fostering the one and wrestling against the other, are for a longer or shorter period true of us all. But God's Spirit does not always strive with men, and ere we are aware the crucial time of life is past and we stand defeated. Our victory is in God's victory over us. We prevail when God prevails with us. This is the lesson of Jacob, that we conquer ourselves when we are conquered by God, and we possess the future when God possesses us.

VIII

Joseph, the God=accompanied
Man

Genesis, Chapters Thirty=seven to Fifty

VII

I. The Narrative

JACOB had twelve sons, from whom descended the twelve tribes of Israel. Of these twelve sons Joseph and Benjamin were favorites of their father, since they were the children of Rachel, his favorite wife. The father's partiality was especially shown to Joseph, whom he clothed in the long-sleeved, many-colored tunic, which nobles were accustomed to wear and which was better suited to a life of luxury than to that of a shepherd. Such favoritism naturally excited the jealousy of Joseph's brethren, and to jealousy was added hate when Joseph himself innocently related to them his dreams, in which they, and even his father, were represented as doing him obeisance. So bitter did the resentment of Joseph's brethren become that on a day when he visited them in the fields with their sheep they seized him and cast him into

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

a "bottle-shaped cistern," and for a time left him there to die, but upon second thought they drew him out and sold him for twenty pieces of silver to a merchant caravan going to Egypt. Then, taking his tunic of many colors, they dipped it in the blood of a goat and carried it to his father, who thereafter mourned his favorite son as dead.

Arriving in Egypt, the merchants sold Joseph to Potiphar, chief executioner to Pharaoh, who purchased him for a house-servant. So trustworthy and efficient did the Hebrew boy prove, however, that he was soon made sole ruler of Potiphar's house. In the absence of the master, Potiphar's wife looked upon the splendid young overseer with lustful eyes and sought to entice him to sin, but being baffled in her design she turned against him, accused him falsely, and had him thrown into prison.

But Joseph by faithfulness and efficiency again won his way and was soon made overseer of the prison. In one of the wards were confined two servants of the king, his cupbearer and his baker. Each of these men on the same night had dreams, which Joseph interpreted and the interpretations came true. As his dreams indicated,

Joseph, the God=accompanied Man

the baker was hanged and the cupbearer was restored to his office.

Two years afterward Pharaoh had a dream which greatly troubled him, and among all the wise men of Egypt there was none who could interpret it. Then the cupbearer, remembering that Joseph had interpreted his dream, told Pharaoh of his prisoner's power, whereupon Joseph was at once summoned into the presence of the king.

Pharaoh's dream Joseph easily interpreted, and found it to signify that there were to be seven years of plenty, followed by seven years of famine. After the interpretation had been given Joseph ventured the suggestion that Pharaoh place a wise man over all Egypt to collect, during the years of plenty, grain sufficient for the years of famine. "There is none so wise as thou," said Pharaoh, and at his command Joseph was made first lord of Egypt, and was commanded to carry out the plan which he himself had suggested.

The famine came as predicted and extended not only throughout Egypt, but to Canaan, where Jacob lived with his eleven sons. At length Jacob was compelled to

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

send his sons down to Egypt for corn, and Joseph at once recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. He made pretense of dealing harshly with them, and compelled them to promise that they would return, bringing Benjamin, Joseph's only full brother, with them.

The story of Joseph making himself known to his brethren runs through several chapters. To condense the account would be to mar it. Every word should be read. When Joseph had concealed his identity as long as he could he bade all others go out from him, and when alone with his brothers made himself known to them, saying, "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt."

Pharaoh, being informed that Joseph's brothers had come, gave command that Joseph's father and brethren with their families and flocks be brought from Canaan to Egypt. Here they were cared for during all the years of famine and until the death of Joseph.

2. Character of the Narrative

(1) After the crucial struggle in Jacob's life, noted in the last chapter, the Bible

Joseph, the God=accompanied Man

narrative does not follow Jacob, except incidentally. Like a stream in the desert, which sinks beneath the sand and then comes to the surface here and there in oases, the narrative spreads out and records the doings, or rather the misdoings, of Jacob's sons and daughters, after which the scattered parts of the narrative flow together again and concentrate on Joseph.

While in all these narratives we recognize a historic purpose, it is important to observe that we are dealing with prophetic history, history written by prophets of God with the specific purpose of showing God's relation to men and the working out of God's purposes through men. The prophetic method was to show God's relation to individuals, and the individuals chosen are usually presented to us in strong contrast with other individuals of very different character and conduct. For example, Abraham, the man of right choice, is placed in strong contrast with Lot, the man of wrong choice. Jacob, the man of worthful character is strongly contrasted with Esau, the man of worthless character. And in the Joseph narrative, Joseph, the man of right purpose and faithful conduct, stands in

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

strongest contrast with his brothers, who are men of wrong purpose and shameful conduct.

This contrast is specially marked in the case of Judah. After the prophet has traced Joseph down into Egypt and is ready to present to the reader his pure character in the face of the temptation of Potiphar's wife, he interrupts his narrative for a moment in order to insert that unsavory chapter (Gen. 38) about Judah going down to Hirah, the Adullamite, a chapter which some think wholly out of place, interrupting, as it seems, the beautiful, sweet, and pure story of Joseph. The careful reader will observe that this Judah chapter is not dropped just anywhere into the story of Joseph. First, Joseph is very carefully and studiously followed down into Egypt. In the next section of the narrative the prophetic writer is to place before us Joseph's great temptation, for resisting which God is with him and prospers him. But before he gives us this section he introduces the abominable Judah chapter, in which Judah condemns himself for the sin so prevalent in the oriental world and which constitutes Joseph's temptation. With what consum-

Joseph, the God-accompanied Man

mate literary art and with what true prophetic instinct the writer makes this black Judah incident, upon which falls only condemnation, the background of the white Joseph conduct, upon which God's blessing so abundantly rests!

(2) Many scholars assure us that while the Joseph narrative has in it an ideal element, as has all history written primarily for the purpose of teaching, it is absolutely accurate in every reference to Egyptian conditions and customs. On account of the character of the Nile Valley, Egypt lay apart from other nations. Her civilization was distinct and unique. Her customs, language, and system of writing were shared by no other nation. It is matter of historic record that it was not uncommon for Hebrews to rise to power in Egypt. The writer of the Joseph narrative understood the method of Egyptian taxation. He frequently uses Egyptian words and names. To bestow a golden collar on one for distinguished services, as upon Joseph, was a well-known Egyptian custom. In Egyptian history there are many references to severe famines. And many other incidental references indicate the accuracy of the narra-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

tive with reference to Egyptian life and customs.

(3) In all Bible narratives many valuable lessons are to be found. Just because the narratives are so true to life and lie so deeply imbedded in experience, these lessons spring up on every hand like flowers in a field. For example, in the Joseph narrative one author enumerates the following lessons:

a. Trial develops character. *b.* Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. *c.* All things work together for good to them that love God. *d.* Helping another, as Joseph helped the cupbearer and baker in prison, lightens one's own burdens. *e.* God does not forget his faithful servants when they are in trouble. *f.* He who improves small opportunities will not miss life's greater chances. *g.* Whosoever would be great among you must be your servant. *h.* Those who do wrong will be confronted with this wrong in the most embarrassing and unexpected crises of life. *i.* God overrules evil for good. *j.* The severest tests of character come at the most unexpected times and in the most unexpected ways. *k.* Loyalty to humble kinsmen in the time of

Joseph, the God=accompanied Man

one's own exaltation is a mark of nobility.

l. Forgiveness and love are invincible.¹

All of these momentous lessons and doubtless others spring legitimately out of the story of Joseph. And yet, when a prophet writes history, sifting out the immaterial, selecting from the mass the things essential to his purpose, and idealizing the whole in such a way as to be true both to the history and to the great message he would teach through it, there is to be expected some great central theme that is burning in the prophetic historian's soul, and which it is the aim of his writing to set forth, his purpose to make plain, and his desire to make live in the hearts of his readers.

In the Joseph narrative, therefore, as in the others, we are to look for the lesson not as for something hidden and which must be discovered, not as for something scattered and which must be gathered up, but rather for a lesson which the narrative bears everywhere upon its face and makes perfectly clear, a lesson that is drawn from every part of the narrative into a central unity, and glows like a single flaming torch.

¹ Kent, "Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History," pp. 133, 142, 143.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

3. *The Teaching of the Narrative*

What then is the lesson that flames out of this Joseph story as a beacon-light to guide the souls of men?

(1) The prophet sets Joseph before us as a man who in all things is faithful to God. Joseph is the purest, sweetest, and morally the staunchest character in the Old Testament. The prophet does not follow his life in detail, but gives us only half a dozen events in his career. With these, however, he flashes upon our minds as by a burst of sunshine the fact that Joseph was faithful to God. This he does by exhibiting him staunch in righteousness under the severest possible test in a matter in which the whole ancient world was lax. The vividness with which the picture is drawn and the reply quoted from Joseph's lips: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9) shows what the inspired writer is putting to the front of his narrative. It is the faithfulness of Joseph—his faithfulness to his work, his faithfulness to his employer who trusted him, his faithfulness to God in resisting wrong and doing right.

Joseph, the God-accompanied Man

(2) But when the prophet has exhibited Joseph's faithfulness he has but prepared the way for the great theme that is firing his soul. That theme is that God is with the man, always with the man, under all circumstances with the man who is faithful to him. In every narrative that we have studied thus far this truth has been implied. Adam and Eve were sent from the garden because of sin. To Cain God said, "If thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted?" (Gen. 4:7). Noah was saved because he was found righteous. Abraham was blessed because he was obedient. Jacob was used of God because he surrendered to God. But in this Joseph narrative God is shown to be with Joseph in every detail of his life: in his boyish dreams, prophetic of coming greatness; when in the pit, by the timely arrival of the merchants; when carried into Egypt, by his entrance into the house of Potiphar; when in temptation, by the strength given to resist; when in prison, by his ability to interpret dreams; when called before Pharaoh, not only by power to interpret dreams, but also by wisdom to suggest remedies; when ruler of Egypt, by the success which at-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

tended his efforts; and later, when he was made the means of providing for his father's household. That the teaching that God is with the one who is faithful to him is central in the mind of the prophet is evident, not only from the fact that it shines forth from every detail of the narrative, but also from the fact that three different times the author declares in so many words that "*God was with Joseph.*"

This great and blessed truth has become a commonplace of our faith, at least theoretically. It is a teaching often expressed and always implied throughout the Bible. It is the message of the prophets when they plead with the people to return unto God that he may return unto them. It is the message of the Spirit at Jordan and at the Mount of Transfiguration, when he said of the Christ, "This is my beloved Son" (Matt. 3:17; 17:5). It is the message of Christ when he said: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you" (John 14:18). But nowhere in the Bible is the truth that God is faithful to those who are faithful to him more fully or beautifully or forcefully expressed than in the story of Joseph.

Joseph, the God-accompanied Man

(3) Every life is involved in two conditions which at times may give the soul great anxiety. First, we are surrounded by the providences of God, which at times seem kind and at other times cruel. Secondly, we are encompassed by the purposes of men, which are sometimes plans for our help and at other times designs for our undoing. Any narrative, therefore, that would show God to be with the faithful man must exhibit God with the man in those providences which seem cruel and amidst those machinations of men which seem devilish. It must show that the hard as well as the easy circumstance of life is of God, and that God has power to overrule the evil designs of men for good. These two facts are precisely what the Joseph narrative makes clear.

(a) No error has more persistently possessed the mind of man than that pain, sorrow, and misfortune are direct punishments of God. To controvert this error, the book of Job was written. "Who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" the disciples inquired of the Lord. (John 9:2.) Even at the present time if signal misfortune comes to many, they

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

wonder what sin they have committed to deserve such punishment. In this narrative the pit into which Joseph was cast, the slavery into which he was sold, the prison in which he was confined, and the devastating famine that came upon Egypt, are shown to be stepping-stones to help Joseph up to the larger purposes of God. This truth one may trace through every century of Israel's history. Their bondage in Egypt gave national solidarity; their wilderness wanderings gave instruction; their numerous defeats in battle gave reproof and discipline; their Babylonian captivity secured purification; and finally, the overthrow of Jerusalem made a Jerusalem of the world where all were free to worship God in spirit and in truth. As God was with Joseph, so in all these circumstances he is seen to be with Israel working out his larger purposes.

(b) But we are presented with a more difficult problem when into God's providences there enters the personal factor and the circumstances into which we are brought are due to the sins of others or to their evil designs. "Ye meant evil against me," said Joseph to his brethren, "but God meant it for good" (Gen. 50:20). That

Joseph, the God-accompanied Man

is, the evil that men do God has power to overrule for good and to make useful for the furtherance of his purposes. This does not excuse the sinner nor palliate his sins, nor does it ward off from him the consequences of his deeds. These facts the narrative abundantly shows. Joseph's brethren are brought in cringing fear to his feet, they confess their sin with trembling lips, and plead for their lives at his hands.

Thus the Joseph narrative sets forth with great clearness and power what the Scriptures everywhere teach and what history abundantly proves, that God is on his throne, that man by sinning cannot defeat the Almighty except as he defeats his purposes for his own soul, that ultimately God will have his way while a man's sins will surely return upon his own head to accomplish his defeat and humiliation.

(4) Those familiar with Israel's history will at once discern the pertinency of the lesson of the Joseph narrative to Israel's national life. Her besetting sin was unfaithfulness to God. She was ever departing from the living God to serve idols. The historic struggle of the faithful few in Israel was to cling to God and to be true

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

to him under circumstances which to human eyes portended only evil. The Joseph narrative abundantly shows that those who are faithful to God may hope in him under any and all conditions, and that circumstances the most dark and discouraging will ultimately work out the larger purposes of the Almighty for those who are true to him.

(5) This lesson comes with equal pertinency and with tremendous power to the modern man. The temptation to compromise righteousness in order to win worldly success was never greater than to-day. It is not easy to remain honest when riches are the reward of dishonesty; not easy to be content in lowly position when sin will lift one to high position; not easy to win advancement by slow stages and hard knocks when compromise promises instant success. There is no faith more vital to godliness to-day than confidence that God is always and under all circumstances with the man who is faithful to him, that God will keep that man safe, guide him truly, and bring him to ultimate success and honor beside which all achievements won by sinning are but beggarly acquisitions of debased manhood.

VIIII

The Redemption of Israel from
Egypt

Exodus, Chapters One to Twenty, and Deuteronomy,
Chapters Thirty-one to Thirty-four

VIII

ALTHOUGH some hundreds of years intervene between Joseph and Moses—authorities vary from one hundred to four hundred and thirty—a single chapter, the first of the book of Exodus, spans the broad historic chasm. Such a fact may serve to illustrate what has before been remarked, that the inspired writers do not aim to give a detailed history of Israel, but only such events as show the hand of God leading his people. In the study upon which we now enter it is of the utmost importance to observe this fact. It should be noted also that the method of the prophets in showing God's dealings with Israel—a method which eliminates details, and casts events into dramatic pictures—is the most vivid and forceful that could be employed. There are no stories in the world like Bible stories, none that so fascinate the imagination and rivet themselves upon the memory. What makes them the world's

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

great teachers is not only the truth which they contain, but also the form in which they are cast.

1. The Narrative

(1) After Joseph's death a king arose in Egypt "who knew not Joseph," and the Israelites were reduced to bondage. But the slaves multiplied so rapidly that the reigning Pharaoh became fearful lest their increasing numbers should overthrow the ruling dynasty. An order was therefore issued that all male Hebrew children should be destroyed.

Because of this law, when Moses was born, his mother placed him in a water-tight basket and anchored the basket to the bulrushes at the margin of the Nile. Pharaoh's daughter, as was her custom, came to the Nile to bathe, and noticing the basket, with characteristic feminine curiosity, sent her maid to fetch it. The crying babe aroused the royal daughter's sympathies, and when the babe's sister, who had come to watch, approached and said, "Shall I find a nurse for you?" permission was granted, and the happy sister ran with all speed for her mother, who again received her own child,

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

which she nursed until he was old enough to be taken to the royal court, where Pharaoh's daughter reared him as her son, and where, according to the sermon of the martyr, Stephen, he became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.

(2) When Moses was grown to manhood he keenly felt the cruel bondage of his people, and was conscious of the call of God to deliver them. Happening one day upon an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, he killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand. Next day, finding a Hebrew smiting a Hebrew, he reproved the aggressor, who retorted, "Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? thinkest thou to kill me as thou killedst the Egyptian?" (Exod. 2: 14.) When the news of the killing came to the ears of Pharaoh he sought to slay Moses, whereupon Moses fled to a mountainous wilderness in the region of the Red Sea. Here dwelt certain nomadic tribes, who evidently worshiped the same God as the Hebrews. A priest of one of these tribes, the Midianites, had several daughters, one of whom Moses married, and for some years afterward he was employed by his father-in-law as a shepherd.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(3) One day as Moses watched his flock God appeared to him in a burning bush and said: "I have surely seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters . . . and I am come down to deliver them. . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exod. 3:7f.). To this startling message Moses began to make excuses: "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?" (Exod. 3:11.) "They will not believe me" (Exod. 4:1). "O Lord, I am not eloquent" (Exod. 4:10). To all of which Jehovah answered, Go. "I will be with thee," and the deliverance will be wrought not by your power, but by mine. (See Exod. 3:12f.)

(4) With Aaron as his spokesman, Moses goes to deliver Israel from bondage, carrying in his hand the wonder-working staff. His request to let the people go, Pharaoh refuses; and not only refuses, but makes the occasion of placing the Hebrews in still harder bondage, in which they are required not only to make as many bricks per day as formerly, but also to gather the straw

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

used in making them, whence we have the phrase, "To make bricks without straw." The Hebrews themselves now complain against Moses. Those whom he had come to deliver are ready to stone him, whereupon Moses in bitter disappointment cries unto God.

The plagues are now brought upon Egypt. The Nile turns to the color of blood and becomes foul; frogs multiply into a pest; heaps of dead frogs breed all kinds of flies; flies carry disease germs to man and beast, which break out with fevers, tumors, and boils; the land is swept with hail until crops are beaten into the ground and trees battered to stubs; swarms of locusts multiply until they obscure the sun; and so afflicted does the pest-ridden, fever-stricken land become that there is scarcely a home in which one does not lie dead.

(5) When the Egyptians no longer have strength or courage to resist, the Hebrews, who dwelt in Goshen, a place apart from the stricken Nile district, arise under the leadership of Moses and flee eastward toward the land whence their ancestor, Jacob, had come. But on the east the Egyptian frontier was guarded by a wall and fortress, which were

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

not easily passed. The fleeing host, turning southward, seems to have come upon the wall where it extended a little way into the shallow water of one arm of the Red Sea. An east wind drove back the water, and the Israelites went across this arm of the sea on dry ground. The pursuing Egyptians, essaying to follow, were overwhelmed by the returning waters.

(6) The wandering in the wilderness now begins. Moses is leader, prophet, judge, and lawgiver. There is murmuring because water fails, and murmuring because food fails. Water is provided; manna is found; and quails are sent. At Sinai, while the mountain smokes like a volcano, trembles as though shaken by earthquake shocks, reverberates with peals of thunder, and flashes fire as though shooting forth lightning, Moses, who at the command of God had gone up into it, receives the Ten Commandments, while at its base the people make and worship the golden calf.

And now for forty years, until nearly all who have come out of Egypt are dead, these tribes wander in the wilderness. Moses, on account of his disobedience, is not permitted to lead the children of Is-

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

rael into the Promised Land. This land he himself is not allowed to enter. Going to the top of Mount Pisgah, he views it from afar; and then, after he has blessed the people whom he delivered, whom he has led, borne with, prayed for, and suffered for, he is gathered to his fathers.

2. Character of the Narrative

(1) It has already been pointed out that just as there are three accounts of our Lord's life, and sometimes four, so of the principal events of the Old Testament there are several accounts; and in the Bible as it has come down to us, these accounts are woven together. One of the chief services which Bible scholars have rendered to our knowledge of the sacred word is the separation of these accounts from each other, so that the age, the difference in content, and the influences which determined the form of each, may be approximately known.

(2) Between the earlier and later records of Moses' work there is a marked difference in form. The one holds closer to natural events, while the other is more filled with the miraculous. The one lies nearer to sober history, while the other

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

partakes more of dramatic picture. For example, at the crossing of the Red Sea, the earlier account says that Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all night, while the later account represents Moses stretching his rod over the sea and cleaving a path through it so that the waters stand like walls on either side. It is but a different way of expressing the same fact—the marvelous deliverance of God. One way is more literal, the other is more pictorial. One way is more historical, the other is more rhetorical.

Similar variations are found in the account of the plagues. The older narrative represents these plagues as extraordinary, natural phenomena, which Jehovah uses to deliver Israel. The later narratives are more spectacular and dramatic. One of the later narratives represents Moses, and another, Aaron, as stretching out the rod and bringing the plagues, and again stretching out the rod and dispelling them. It is but a different way of expressing the same thing—the marvelous deliverance of God.

(3) In one's study of the Bible it is important to note the marked difference between the oriental and the occidental

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

mind. The occidental thinks in elaborate details; the oriental thinks by leaps and bounds. The one thinks in terms of sober history; the other in pictures. The westerner seeks a scientific analysis; the easterner, a dramatic situation. The emphasis of the modern mind is on "How?" "How did God do things?" The emphasis of the prophetic mind was upon the fact that God did things. And the inspired writers always relate the fact in the most impressive manner.

(4) That the children of Israel were in Egypt, and that in a remarkable manner they were delivered from Egyptian bondage, there is no question among the best biblical scholars. In fact, it is matter of contemporary record that about the time of the deliverance a series of remarkable calamities overwhelmed Egypt. There were rival pretenders to the throne. Civil war broke out. Petty nobles ruled. The land was deluged with blood. Anarchy prevailed. From every side the enemies of Egypt invaded and plundered. For a time government was practically at an end.

In such details, however, the prophetic writer would not be interested, even if he

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

were familiar with them. With the civil strife of Egypt, with her foreign wars, or with the destiny of her throne, he is not concerned. His eye is upon the fact, and his heart burns with the fact, that Jehovah brings a marvelous deliverance to his people. The account of that deliverance he puts in a form which rivets it upon the memory, fires the imagination, and stirs the heart to its depths.

3. *The Plagues*

(1) To each of the Egyptian plagues there is a natural background. And it is not the last time in history that natural events conspired in an extraordinary way to accomplish the purposes of God. There are times when the water of the Nile actually looks like blood. The June rise brings down vegetable matter and minute organisms, which turn the water first green and later a dull red. At such times the water is very unwholesome, and when such conditions are aggravated it is really unfit for use, although the Nile is the only source of water supply in Egypt. When the water is thus foul the conditions are most favorable for the multiplication of frogs. Early

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

writers have repeatedly mentioned remarkable multiplication of these creatures. In Egypt flies and stinging insects are perennial pests; and we have learned from science, and know from experience, that a land filled with dead frogs or decaying fish would furnish the condition for their rapid multiplication.

Only recently we have learned that insects carry disease. It is not surprising, therefore, that after the plague of flies and gnats there should come that of murrain (a fever) upon cattle, and blains (tumors) and boils upon man and beast. As late as 1842 four thousand oxen died of plague in Egypt.

Hail-storms are rare in the land of the Nile, but all the more remarkable when they come. In 1843 Lepsius reports one which made the day as dark as night. And in some parts of the United States we know what it means to have our crops pounded into the earth and our trees all but destroyed by hail. In Egypt travelers have seen the sun obscured by great locust-flights; and in South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas, settlers have seen grasshoppers obscure the sun in the same manner.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

It will be observed that in the plagues of the foul Nile, the frogs, the flies, and the diseases, there is a scientific sequence, in which each might be the occasion of the succeeding one. Observations in Egypt also show that there is a close sequence in time between the plagues. The Nile becomes foul in July or August; frogs are common in September; flies swarm in October and November; the diseases which they spread immediately follow; hail occurs only in the rainy month of January; the swarms of locusts come in early spring. And after such a series of calamities we are not surprised to learn that one lies dead in every home.

The incident of the crossing of the Red Sea does not stand alone in history. In Lake Menzaleh, lying north of the Red Sea, Major-General Tullock reports that on one occasion the waters were driven back several miles by a strong wind, leaving the bottom of the lake dry. And in 1738 the Russians captured the Crimea by traversing a passage made by the wind in the Putrid Sea.¹

¹ Kent, "Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History," p. 183.

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

(2) Such is the physical background of these remarkable incidents. What of their miraculous element? There is such a thing as interpreting Scripture too literally. We should not make miracles out of pictorial phrases, rhetorical expressions, or dramatic situations. And yet beyond question the events of the life of Moses are filled to the brim with the extraordinary workings of God, workings of the greatest significance for all nations and all time. Was there no miracle in the remarkably favorable season in the upper Nile, which prepared in unusual abundance the materials for the fouling of the river? Was there no miracle in the preparation which for some time had been going on to bring the extraordinary multiplication of frogs, the swarming flies, and ravaging diseases? Was there no miracle in the unparalleled hail-storm, and in the unprecedented flight of locusts just at this time? Was there no miracle in the timeliness of the east wind, which just at the right moment made a path through the sea for Israel, and whose ceasing permitted the waters to return to overwhelm the Egyptians?

There is need of care lest, after having

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

defined a miracle according to the terms of logic, we apply our stilted definition with unwarranted freedom and boldness to the workings of God, and thus become the victims and captives of our own phrases:

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm.

Miracle in the largest, deepest, and most worthy sense, there certainly was in the conspiring of these extraordinary natural events to achieve the purposes of Jehovah. And not only was God working in these extraordinary events, but also in events of national and international significance, to which reference has already been made. All conspired together under the hand of Jehovah to deliver the children of Israel from Egypt, to constitute them a nation, and to accomplish through them a distinct mission in the world.

Such wonder-working is of the most far-reaching significance, for it shows God operative in nature and in history. It fills the word "providence" with a fulness of meaning. It locates within the hand of

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

God every event in every nation. It exhibits history as illustrating the teachings of Christ: "Ye are of more value than many sparrows," and "The very hairs of your head are all numbered." To be able to see the hand of God in nature, in historic events, and in present circumstances and conditions, requires prophetic insight. And such insight is token of the revelation of God and of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

4. God Redeems His People

But the matters which we have so far discussed constitute no part of the prophet's thought in recording these events. The one fact that thrills his soul is this: God is a Redeemer. He redeems his people.

(1) Throughout the book of Deuteronomy the theme of redemption is constantly reiterated. "Because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt" (Deut. 7:8). "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

land of Egypt, and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee" (Deut. 15:15). "O Lord Jehovah, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, that thou hast redeemed through thy greatness" (Deut. 9:26). This deliverance is constantly referred to in Scripture as a redemption. And the one thing that the Hebrews never ceased to believe in and to hope for, was that God would redeem them from all their distresses.

(2) In our studies thus far we have been following the fundamental teachings of the Bible from the first chapter of Genesis. But not till we come to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt do we meet the fact of redemption. In the creation story we saw Jehovah as the Creator of the world and all that was in it. In the Temptation narrative we saw the spiritual nature of man thoroughly analyzed. In the account of Cain and Abel we saw worship and conduct conjoined, while both were required to be the expression of a right spirit. In the Flood narrative we saw the righteous and wicked separated and meeting different ends. In the Abraham story we saw God in his relation to an obedient man. In the Jacob narrative we saw Jehovah wrestling

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

with a sinner of high purpose, and striving to bend him to his will. In the account of Joseph we saw God's faithfulness meeting man's faithfulness. Not until we come to Moses do we meet the great fact of redemption. All that precedes but paves the way for this fact of supreme interest to man, that God is a Redeemer. And from Moses to the close of the Old Testament the inspired record follows the outworking of God's redemption in the history of the Hebrew people, and contains an increasingly clear and full expression of this central world-fact. The "remnant," of which the prophets speak, is a redeeming remnant. The "suffering servant of Jehovah" is a redeeming servant. The "Coming One," to whom all eyes turn, is coming to redeem. And at length the Christ himself, the Redeemer, comes to redeem a world in a sense larger and deeper than any of which the Jew thought or dreamed or hoped or prayed.

(3) Even in this earliest expression of the "glad tidings," the conditions of redemption are remarkably clear and full. Two of them we find in the call of Moses:

a. God says, "And now, behold, the

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

cry of the children of Israel is come unto me" (Exod. 3:9). Here is the first condition of redemption, the cry of the soul unto God. It is true that God's Spirit convicts of sin; but there is no redemption until there is a movement of the soul in a prayer for help. In nearly every case those whom Christ healed, even physically, cried to him for healing. And to-day, though hundreds may be converted, no one is ever converted who will not pray. This first condition of redemption is as true of nations as of individuals. Nations and peoples have been redeemed from a lower to a higher state only as they have sought the help of God. No nation has ever been "exalted" except through righteousness. Sin has ever proved a "reproach" to any people.

b. To Moses God said: "Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exod. 3:10). That is, God delivers through a deliverer. He redeems by calling, equipping, and sending a redeemer. God's call was in the heart of Moses when, as a young man, he slew the Egyptian.

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

That call never comes to one who does not discern needs. From the task set for him, Moses shrank, as has every redeemer of men; as did Isaiah when he said, "I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5); as did our Saviour when in Gethsemane he prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass away from me" (Matt. 26:39).

But how fully Moses answered the call, and how complete was his self-giving for his people, we learn from those words which he uttered in one of the most difficult experiences of the wilderness wandering: "Yet now, (O Lord) if thou wilt forgive their sin . . . ; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (Exod. 32:32). He bore the murmurings of the people; he was charitable toward their fleshliness when they longed for the leeks and onions of Egypt; he was patient with their impatience; he pleaded for them in their sins; and, just as Isaiah never experienced the glory that he prophesied, and John the Baptist never enjoyed the kingdom that he preached, so Moses never entered the Promised Land, but saw it only from afar. Yet, such is the work and the fate of a redeemer of men. The triumph

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

and the glory are revealed only by the future years.

(4) There are few more dramatic or impressive scenes in the Bible than that of the giving of the law at Sinai. And, whether so intended by the writer or not, every part of it is wonderfully typical of the long process of redemption. Those whom God redeems are to be redeemed, not only from something, but to something. Moses, talking with God in the cloud-begirt mountain, is given the tables of the Ten Commandments. Unto these commandments the people are to be redeemed until they shall be written on the tables of their hearts. At the foot of the mountain the people, worshiping the golden calf which their own hands have made, have turned their faces again toward Egypt. The golden calf is typical of their past, the commandments of their future; the one of their bondage, the other of their liberty; the first of what they are to be redeemed from, the second of what they are to be redeemed to.

Typical also is the breaking of the tables of stone; for although the tables of commandments be shattered a thousand times

The Redemption of Israel from Egypt

by the impatience of man, who comprehends not the long and tedious process of redemption, yet God gives his law over again, "line upon line" and "precept upon precept."

There is only one scene in the Bible more impressive and more filled with promise than this at Sinai. In it the Redeemer of men, the one in whose heart the law of God was perfectly written, the one who himself was henceforth to be the Law of men's lives, was hanging upon the cross. Over his head the heavens turned to darkness. Under his feet the earth reeled and quaked. No longer now, however, is the law of God fallen and broken, but lifted up, completed, and made effective in Him who was able to say, "It is finished." The first writing of the perfect law of God in a life is finished, and therefore the process of writing the perfect law of God in all lives is begun.

IIx

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

Joshua, Chapters One to Nine

IX

THE purpose of the Scriptures is spiritual instruction, and it is important to observe that such instruction is imparted by the Bible records just as they stand. With reference to any narrative, such as that of the crossing of the Jordan, or the taking of Jericho, a number of questions might arise, each of which in and of itself is quite legitimate. For example, are these narratives circumstantial history? Are they historical events spiritually interpreted? Or are they pictorial representations of historical facts? While such questions are proper subjects of investigation, there is imminent danger lest in seeking answers to them the great spiritual truths which the narrator had in mind be overlooked.

If one were to consider critically any modern sermon, the first question ought to be, What is its spiritual message? This message will be expressed by the various materials just as they are set down by the

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

preacher, not by these materials as they lie torn one from the other, and assigned each to its source and original connection by one who discerns no spiritual message in the sermon as it stands.

It is significant of the spiritual purpose of the Scriptures that the first four incidents narrated of Israel's conquest of the Promised Land, set forth four conditions which are fundamental in all spiritual conquest.

1. The Crossing of the Jordan

The first, and possibly the most fundamental of these conditions, is *confidence that God is with his people*. This confidence is expressed by the narrative of the crossing of the Jordan. It is the time of harvest, when the Jordan overflows its banks, and the least favorable time for a crossing. But suddenly the waters are cut off. The people pass over "dry-shod," as they had passed through the Red Sea under Moses. The inevitable conclusion is that as God was with Moses, so now he is with Joshua; that as Jehovah brought the people out of bondage, so now he is leading them to conquest. The narrative just as it

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

stands expresses this fact in unmistakable terms and with great power.

The modern scientific mind turns with not a little skepticism, and even with a feeling of irreverence upon the narrative, to question its historicity and to challenge its truthfulness. Were the waters of the Jordan really cut off? It happens that the narrative is here rather specific, stating that "the waters which came down from above stood, and rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam." Adam was the name of a village which meant "red earth" or "clay."

A similar incident occurred in A. D. 1257. To save a retreating Moslem army it was necessary to repair a bridge which spanned the Jordan. Its foundations had been undermined by the swollen waters. On arriving at the bridge the workmen found the bed of the river dry, and so it remained for several hours, until the repairs were nearly completed, when the waters flowed on again. The historian states that the cause of the waters being cut off was a landslide farther up the river, that the swollen stream had undermined the banks until they fell in, thus making a dam across

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the stream. His interpretation of the event is that it was a remarkable token of Allah's favor.¹ Doubtless some such natural occurrence forms the basis of our Bible narrative.

Nothing is gained and much is lost by not giving full weight to such natural phenomena, for they were the providences of God, and had a use in producing in the minds of the Israelites the assurance that God was with them, leading them, and fighting for them. Things do not just happen in this world. God is over all. Indeed, the most subtle and fatal infidelity is that which pushes God out of so-called natural events and discerns him only in the supernatural. Too long we have treated the Old Testament as the Pharisees treated Christ, saying, "Show us a sign." Too long we have seen God most plainly in the most extraordinary. To the Pharisees Christ replied: "Can you not interpret the signs of the times? Can you not discern God in the conjunction of events?" The really great thing about the Jewish people, and that which made them the spiritual teachers of

¹ Kent, "Founders and Rulers of United Israel," p. 5.

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

the world, was just this fact, their discernment of the working of God in all natural phenomena and in all events of history. It was God who gave or withheld rain, God who brought or sent away the locusts, God who blessed or blighted the vineyards, God who granted or refused harvests, God who sent victory or defeat in war, God who reduced the people to slavery or built them up in national life. There were no natural phenomena and no events of history in which they did not discern the hand of God and interpret him as working immediately and effectively.

Whatever may be the historic facts behind the crossing of the Jordan, the great thing as the narrative lies in the record, is the narrator's spiritual interpretation of the event, the prophet's discernment of God at work. Such discernment and such interpretation establish in the minds of the people confidence that God is with them and will fight their battles. It has always been true, and is true to-day, that confidence in the presence and help of God is the fundamental necessity in all man's work for God and all man's spiritual conquests both of himself and others.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

2. *The Taking of Jericho*

A second condition necessary to spiritual conquest is *faith that nothing is too hard for God when we obey him*. This condition is vividly illustrated in the taking of Jericho. No doubt the narrative is purposely thrown into that form which will set the truth in clearest light and teach it most impressively.

Jericho lay on the western side of the Jordan Valley, about five miles north of the Dead Sea. It was the lowest city on the face of the earth, being eight hundred feet below sea level. Though situated in a fertile spot, it never gave rise to any man of distinction, and its people never were renowned in war. Yet it was a walled city of some strength. Its ruins to-day comprise a mound one thousand two hundred feet long and in places fifty feet high. The ancient wall had a stone foundation and was built of burned brick. In places the ruined wall is ten feet high, and from ten to thirty feet thick. Yet its condition when taken by the Hebrews can only be conjectured. The Bible narrative, however, conveys the idea that it was a city of some strength.

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

The method by which Israel took the city was, to say the least, unique, and, from the human standpoint, pitifully inadequate. The Hebrews, led by their priests and the ark of God, march around the city once, and then return to camp. This seemingly futile operation was repeated each day for six days. On the seventh day the city was encompassed seven times. Then at a given signal all the people shouted and the walls came tumbling down. Each warrior entered the city opposite the spot where he stood, and thus Jericho was taken.

Some scholars have suggested that this method of taking the city was a stratagem to throw the inhabitants off guard. It has been thought that after making a circuit of the city in such futile fashion for six days, the Hebrew army would become an object of ridicule to the inhabitants of Jericho rather than an object of fear. Others have suggested that Rahab and her family betrayed the city from within, and at a given signal opened the gates. It is more likely that we have not a complete account of this historic event and that more incidents are left out of the record than are inserted. The Bible is not a book of detailed his-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

tory, but of spiritual teaching. By confession of the Gospels themselves we have not a complete account of our Lord's life; and the accounts which we have are professedly arranged to emphasize particular phases of the Lord's work. Beyond question we do not make sufficient allowance for pictorial methods of oriental expression; but, on the other hand, interpret rhetorical figures with unwarranted literalness; while, as a matter of fact, rhetorical figures constitute one of the best means of conveying spiritual truths.

The account of the taking of Jericho, so simply and effectively narrated, sets forth with startling clearness the fact that *nothing is too hard for God when men obey him*. The outstanding facts of the narrative are these: (1) Specific directions for the taking of Jericho are given by the messenger of Jehovah. (2) From these directions Joshua does not swerve in any particular, but follows them to the letter. (3) By Joshua's obedience the seemingly impossible is achieved. The walls come tumbling down as Jehovah had promised; and thus it becomes evident to all that nothing is too hard for Jehovah when his people obey him. On the threshold of Israel's conquest of

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

Canaan, when a hundred seemingly insuperable tasks confronted her, this was the truth that she most of all needed to know. Without confidence in Jehovah's power nothing awaited her but disaster and defeat. A lack of such confidence was what led to the long wandering in the wilderness. The spies might properly inquire the best way to take the land, but not whether the land could be taken, after God had told the people to go up and take it. When God tells his people to do a thing, it may be proper to inquire how it may best be done, but not whether it can be done. God commands no impossible tasks. The spies were sent to see if the hosts of Israel could do what God commanded them to do. The result was forty years of aimless and profitless wandering in the wilderness. It is always so. It always leads to wandering in a wilderness when we refrain from attempting what God commands through fear lest we shall fail.

This is the truth that every century must learn, and the truth that demands emphasis to-day. Modern conditions have thrust upon us new problems. Weak-hearted Christians are filled with excuses. Regrets

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

are vain. Amid all the difficulties of modern home life let parents obey God, and nothing will be too hard for him to do for them and their children. Amid all the temptations of business, government, social life, and politics, let men obey God, and God will work wonders in our midst, and walls will come tumbling down—defenses of wickedness which seem impregnable—in a way to astonish the world more than did the tumbling walls of Jericho. It is difficult in our day not to be covetous, not to compromise the right, and not to condone sin. Otherwise how shall we make money, and how shall we gain position and power? Nothing is too hard for God to do for those who obey him. Confidence in this fact on the part of God's people would work marvels in purifying modern life and institutions.

3. *The Taking of Ai*

A third condition of spiritual conquest is an understanding of the fact that *not even the least victory is possible to the disobedient*. Just as the formidable task of taking Jericho was easy for God's people when they were obedient, so the insignifi-

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

cant task of taking Ai was impossible to them, when they were disobedient.

The incident is readily recalled. Spies were sent to determine the strength of Ai, a small village not far from Jericho. They returned to Joshua and reported that it was a place of little strength, and that it was wholly unnecessary to march the whole army up the hilly road for its capture. They regarded two or three thousand men quite sufficient to put all the inhabitants to the sword. The suggestions of the spies were adopted and their advice followed. But the two or three thousand men found themselves outmatched. They were defeated and, fleeing before the men of Ai, many of them were slain.

The narrative now discloses the fact that sin was in the camp, and that Israel was defeated because of disobedience. Thus is both announced and illustrated the truth that in fighting God's battles no victory is possible to those who harbor sin. When the sin of Achan—the secreting of a wedge of gold and a Babylonish garment—was discovered, confessed, and punished, the victory over Ai was won.

The truth here enunciated is continu-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

ously insisted upon by the prophets throughout Israel's subsequent victory. Did the land refuse its increase? It was because the people were robbing God. Was Israel carried into captivity? It was because they had turned to idols. "Them that honor me," saith Jehovah, "I will honor" (1 Sam. 2:30).

Translated into terms of modern life, the truth is the same. Even the smallest spiritual battle is lost for the one who consciously harbors sin. For the disobedient the otherwise easy victory is already a defeat. Shall one think to retain health with the microbe of disease already at work in his body? To be sure, the microbe may be small, but it is deadly, for microbes multiply, and their ravages do not depend upon size. So also, rebellion against God in one thing soon spreads to other things. The smallest sin consciously harbored means ultimate defeat, for God does not fight the battles of the disobedient. Jehovah does not count sins as big and little. Away with all sin out of the life. Disobedience, whether in things small or great, is the cardinal sin. With disobedience in the heart no spiritual victories are possible. "If ye love

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

me," said Christ, "ye will keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Disobedience and love cannot abide in the same life. If one remains the other must go.

4. *Neglecting to Consult God*

A fourth condition of spiritual conquest is that *in all matters God is to be consulted*. Otherwise dangerous entanglements arise. This fact is clearly set forth in the incident of the men of Gibeon. They came to Joshua wearing old clothes and old shoes, having old sacks, old wine-skins, and moldy bread. They claimed to be ambassadors from "a very far country," and said that they were sent to make a treaty with Joshua. They declared that the fame of Joshua's greatness and power had reached their people, and that they had also learned of the greatness of his God. "We are your servants," they said; "make a treaty with us." The idea, of course, was that there could be no danger to Israel from such a treaty. Since they were from such a far country intermarriage would be out of the question, and Israel would not be influenced by their religion. Joshua, however, had been commanded not to make treaties, but utterly to

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

destroy the inhabitants of Canaan. But these ambassadors were so suave, and their plea so plausible, that Joshua did not think it was necessary to consult Jehovah. This fact the text of the narrative particularly points out. Israel "asked not counsel at the mouth of the Lord." They concluded a treaty with a people who lived not more than a day's journey from them, and as a consequence they were now exposed to all the dangers arising from close association with idolaters. Had Israel consulted Jehovah the deceit would have been uncovered and the entanglements avoided.

One marvels at the incisiveness of such a presentation of truth, truth that is world-wide and age-long. How our problems would be shot through and through with light if we only consulted God about them, problems of personal habit, problems of social practice, problems of business methods, problems of religious duty and cross-bearing. To a young woman who consulted me ten years ago on a matter involving a question of conscience, I suggested that she make it a subject of prayer. "Oh," she replied, "I know what I shall have to do if I pray about it!" Precisely so. Even the suggestion

The Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan

of taking our problems to God often answers them for us. We argue to persuade ourselves of the rightfulness of things that are doubtful. We gather together plausible reasons. Were we simply to consult God, doubt would often vanish and the path of duty become plain. For example, Should one publicly confess Christ? Should he join a church? Should he use narcotics or intoxicants? Should he give a certain proportion of his income to the work of God? Instead of gathering arguments to justify one's self for pursuing the easiest or most pleasant course, let one take such questions to God in prayer. And so with every question which gives rise to reluctance or doubt. The simple practice of sincerely consulting God would revolutionize the lives of many Christians. It would replace half-heartedness with whole-heartedness, doubt with certainty, carelessness with conviction, weakness with power, a life negative in influence for Christ with a life positive and constructive. It would cast out sin and replace it with purity and sweetness.

Thus it appears that from these four incidents just as they stand in the sacred record spring these four great truths—

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

truths fundamental to spiritual conquest either in individuals or nations, viz.:

(1) The necessity of confidence that God is with one and is working for him and through him. (2) The assurance that when God commands, nothing is too difficult for the obedient. (3) The knowledge that no victory is possible to the disobedient. (4) The certainty that he alone walks in a plain and safe path who consults God.

PART II

THE MISSION OF GOD'S
PEOPLE

⌘

The Book of Jonah

X

1. The Book

FOR the number of chapters it contains the book of Jonah is beyond question the greatest book in the Old Testament, but its spiritual significance has long been obscured by the supposed difficulties of the great fish swallowing Jonah.

It is strange indeed that the sea-monster's swallowing of Jonah should for so long have been a matter of controversy, when the literalness of the incident is of no spiritual significance whatever. To be sure, the Bible teaches spiritual truth by literal history, but it also teaches by parable, allegory, vision, and poetry. Christ's parables of the Prodigal Son, the Wicked Husbandmen, and the Unjust Steward need not be regarded as history in order to convey spiritual teaching. Nathan's parable of the Little Ewe Lamb and Isaiah's parable of the Vineyard give place to no other kind of biblical

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

literature for pointedness and power of spiritual teaching.

Whether or not the book of Jonah is history or parable is simply a question of fact to be determined by the character of the book itself. It is not a question for controversy, with the deeper questions of inspiration and revelation lying in the background of thought, and with the apprehension present that these must be relinquished if the book is not found to be literal history.

Some stumble over the fact that Christ quoted the book of Jonah and referred to the great fish. To them such quotation seems either to stamp the book as literal history or to impugn the knowledge of our Lord. Christ, however, may have used Jonah as an illustration to make clear to his hearers an obscure fact, just as every one uses illustrations. The essential element of an illustration is, not that it be history, but that it be something well known. One's reference to the Prodigal Son does not indicate that he regards this character in Christ's parable as historical. Macbeth, the Merchant of Venice, and Robinson Crusoe are constantly upon our lips as illus-

The Book of Jonah

trations, not because they are historical characters, but because they are well-known characters. So also when Christ referred to Jonah he referred to one with whom every Jewish auditor was familiar.

A prophet by the name of Jonah lived in the eighth century before Christ. He prophesied the extension of the territory of Jeroboam II. He may, indeed, have gone on a mission to Nineveh, as Elijah did to Sarepta and Elisha to Damascus. But the book of Jonah was not written until two or three hundred years after Jeroboam II and, of course, was not written by Jonah himself.

When the book is rightly regarded all difficulties are eliminated, and it comes into its own, not as a holder of curious incident, but as a conveyer of spiritual truth.

2. What the Book Teaches

The book of Jonah sets forth the great sin of Israel's national life. The following points should be carefully noted:

(1) Jonah, the Jew, God sends to preach to Nineveh, the typical Gentile city. Thus is expressed in concrete form the fact that God chose the Jews to give the knowledge

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

of God to the Gentiles. This, as all know, was the historic mission of the Jews. For this they were called out of Chaldea, disciplined in Egypt, trained in the wilderness, given a national home at the cross-roads of the nations, and, through war and trade, sent with God's message to all the world. Their mission was indicated by God's words to Abraham: "I will bless thee, and be thou a blessing . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3); as also by the fact that Christ was "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:32). That glory lay in the fact that by giving light to the Gentiles, Christ was bringing to fruition the mission of God's chosen people.

(2) In the story Jonah flees from his mission. He does not want the Gentile city to repent so as to enjoy the favor of God. In this he represents precisely the attitude of the Jews toward the heathen. Israel held the Gentiles fit only for destruction, and longed to see the wrath of God visited upon them. Jehovah's favors, she claimed exclusively for herself. In our Lord's time, what most offended the Jewish authorities

The Book of Jonah

was that Christ went in to eat with publicans and sinners; and for the apostles, the most difficult task was to break with Jewish exclusiveness. To Jewish Christians also, it was an offense that Peter entered the house of Cornelius and that Paul preached the gospel to Gentiles. It is plain, therefore, that in the book of Jonah the prophet is holding up the national sin of Israel by picturing her running from her appointed mission of giving the knowledge of God to the Gentiles.

(3) During his flight by sea, however, Jonah is swallowed by a great fish, just as Israel, because unfaithful to her mission, was swallowed up by the heathen nations, and for a time—seventy years—held by them in Babylonian captivity, until the people were so humiliated and disciplined that they were willing to obey God.

The imagery of the Jonah story is not peculiar to this book. The heathen world was commonly regarded by the Jews as a surging, restless sea; and the figure of Israel being swallowed up by this sea of heathenism, as by a great sea-monster, was a common one. In Jeremiah 51:34 we read: "Nebuchadrezzar the king of Baby-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

lon . . . hath swallowed me up like a dragon, he hath filled his belly with my delicates, he hath cast me out." Here we have the complete figure of the swallowing of Jonah applied to the Jews in Babylonian captivity.

(4) Next in this great object-lesson Jonah is cast out of the monster's belly on to dry land; and correspondingly, in the experience of Israel—that is, after she has been swallowed up in captivity, and retained among the heathen a few years she is returned to Jerusalem by Cyrus to rebuild the temple and the city. This step, also the verse just quoted from Jeremiah, indicates, "He hath cast me out." The forty-second and forty-fourth verses of the same chapter put the whole situation still more clearly: "The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. . . And I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up."

It is evident, therefore, that the imagery which we find in the book—that of a great sea-monster first swallowing and then casting out—is not peculiar to Jonah, and its application to Israel's captivity in Babylon and her return to Jerusalem was well understood.

The Book of Jonah

(5) In the Jonah story, not for a moment does God turn aside from his purpose. Jonah, taught and disciplined by failure and reverses, is sent a second time to preach to Nineveh. In the history of Israel also, never once does God swerve from his purpose. He thwarts Israel in her designs for national aggrandizement and great wealth, punishes her for idolatry and other sins, and reduces her to a small remnant of her former self; but that remnant he disciplines and teaches, and finally sends upon its mission to the Gentiles until that mission finds consummation in Christ's apostles preaching to all nations.

(6) In this remarkable narration Jonah, when commanded a second time to preach to Nineveh, obeys not only with reluctance, but with a spirit of selfishness. He does not want the Ninevites to repent; he does not want God to forgive them and love them as he forgives and loves Israel. In this respect Jonah is pictured precisely like the elder brother in Christ's parable of the Prodigal Son, who is jealous of the father's forgiveness of the younger brother. Just as in the elder brother Christ was portraying for the scribes and Pharisees their own

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

hateful attitude toward the Gentiles, so the prophet in Jonah is portraying for Israel her own hateful attitude toward the heathen.

The parallel between the Jonah story and the parable of the Prodigal Son is worthy of special notice, for the attitude of Jonah and the elder brother was precisely the attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles. Even in our Lord's time the scribes and Pharisees could not think of the Gentiles as on the same plane of forgiveness with themselves, and they did not want them to enjoy the favor of God as fully as they did. Even to the apostles it was cause of astonishment that Gentiles as well as Jews received the Holy Spirit; and Peter must receive a new revelation before he could say: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10: 34, 35).

3. *Truths Embodied*

The book of Jonah is the gospel of the Old Testament, but the gospel carried by an unwilling messenger. The question of a willing messenger to carry God's good news was a perennial one in the Old Testament,

The Book of Jonah

and in all the Christian centuries it has been the battle-ground of unnumbered lives. Back of the recorded response of Abraham to God's call there was doubtless a struggle. Moses made numerous excuses, and sought to escape his mission. Isaiah, shrinking from the gospel-task, exclaimed: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips" (Isa. 6:5); and only after his lips were cleansed, and he again heard God calling, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" was he able to reply, "Here am I, send me." That the question of the willing messenger was present to the mind of Christ is evident both from his words: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to accomplish his work" (John 4:34), and also from his struggles in the wilderness and in the garden. It was the problem that troubled Peter as he entered the house of Cornelius, and that was still unsettled by Paul when God said to him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5). The problem of the willing messenger has constituted the battle-ground of every reformer, missionary, and minister in every century since Christ. Each messenger has first to conquer him-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

self and bring himself to yield to the will of God. The gospel has always been in the heart of God for all men, but to secure willing messengers has been both God's battle and man's battle. Jonah is the unwilling messenger exhibited to the eyes of the world, and the exhibition reveals three great truths.

(1) God's love is universal. His forgiveness is not only for Jerusalem, but equally for Nineveh. This truth is taught elsewhere in the Old Testament, but only in the book of Jonah is it set forth with that power of concrete illustration which impresses it indelibly upon the mind; just as the lesson of the Prodigal Son is taught in many places in the New Testament, but nowhere else with such power of concrete illustration as in Christ's parable. Graciously does the mantle of God's charity cover the sins of the heathen in every line of the Jonah parable. On the ship all the heathen sailors pray, each to his own god. The emphasis of the narrative falls upon the truth that each prays in ignorance of the fact that his god is not the god of the sea, and therefore prayer to him is vain. When these sailors learn that Jonah's God

The Book of Jonah

is God of the sea, they leave off prayer to heathen gods and pray to Jehovah. The picture of these heathen sailors is one of sincere men worshiping gods who are impotent to help them; of ignorant men who, when better informed, willingly and promptly follow the better information.

A like picture of Nineveh is presented. The narrative reduces the sinfulness of the great city to the minimum. Indeed, it simply mentions her sin at the beginning of the book in the words, "for their wickedness is come up before me." Such mention is necessary in order to justify Jonah's mission at all. The emphasis, however, is not upon Nineveh's sin, but upon her greatness, upon the eagerness of the people to acknowledge their sins, and upon their readiness to repent. The dominant impression produced on the reader is that of a large city filled with throbbing humanity. One is made to see people, people, miles of people who are ignorant of Jehovah, eager for the words of his messenger, and ripe for the harvest of God. It is as when our Lord, looking with great compassion upon the shepherdless multitude, said, "The harvest indeed is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matt.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

9:37). Nowhere in the Old Testament is there a more beautiful picture of the compassionate love of God for all men than in this representation of Jonah's work in Nineveh.

(2) A second truth which the Jonah story makes plain is that he who runs from his mission brings destruction both upon himself and others. Jonah is represented as sound asleep in the hold of the ship, unaware of his danger, while the ship reels and creaks in the raging sea, and the sailors row in vain and pray in vain to bring it safe to land. Unless Jonah shall wake up, confess his sin, and yield himself a sacrifice for the sailors, all must go to the bottom together.

How could the condition of Israel be more accurately represented? The nation was sound asleep spiritually, and oblivious to her own danger. She must either give the knowledge of God to the nations or perish with the nations. She must make herself a sacrifice for the heathen or be destroyed with the heathen, just as the church of Christ to-day must give the gospel to the world or be destroyed by worldliness. It is to be noted that the Jew is safe to-day only

The Book of Jonah

among the nations who have the knowledge of God, and who received that knowledge through Judaism. But for the knowledge of God given to the Gentiles by Israel, Israel would have perished from the earth as the people of Nineveh and Babylon perished. Though she be scattered among all peoples, it is the knowledge of God given to others by her that has preserved her.

(3) The third great truth in the book of Jonah is that of redemptive sacrifice; and it speaks eloquently for the clear-visioned inspiration of the prophet that we find this principle here.

With blanched faces the sailors ask, "How shall we be saved from the raging sea?" "Take me up," said Jonah, "and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you" (Jonah 1:12). To avoid the necessity of such an act, the sailors lay to the oars to bring the ship to land, but without avail, and Jonah, the self-appointed sacrifice, is thrown overboard. It is to be noted that Jonah was cast into the sea without the least hope of rescue. Jonah, the Jew, made his life a sacrifice for the heathen sailors, and both they and he were saved.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

This lesson of self-giving was what Israel needed to learn, for she was seeking her own life, and running from the call of God, which was for her to spend her life to save the nations.

In Jonah's sacrifice of himself is found the appositeness of Christ's reference to him. Christ, like Jonah, acted on the principle of self-giving to save others. Jonah sacrificing himself for the heathen sailors was expressive both of Israel's duty to the Gentiles and Christ's self-giving for the world. As Jonah's sacrifice involved three days and nights in the belly of the sea-monster, so Christ's sacrifice involved his descent into the tomb for a like period.

By his sacrifice Jonah saved not only the sailors, but himself as well. Unto them the sea became calm, while unto him there came unexpected deliverance. Without the casting forth of Jonah on to dry land, this great narrative could neither have embodied the redemptive principle nor given us a foregleam of God's method with Christ, indeed, with all men; for he that saves his own life loses it, while he that loses his life for others saves it. The great fish must not hold Jonah, just as the grave must

The Book of Jonah

not hold Christ, for the redeemer must ever triumph with the redeemed.

4. *Universal Truths*

(1) The first of these three truths—that God's love is universal—is in all but complete possession of the modern mind. But just as Israel failed to hold the fact of God's love for her in proper balance with God's commands to her, so modern men are in imminent peril of luxuriating in what they seemingly believe to be the love of God for disobedient children, prodigal sons, and riotous livers, while they refuse responsibility and ignore God-given missions.

(2) The second of these truths—that avoidance of one's mission means destruction—was never more needed than by Christians to-day. It is a commonplace of conviction among leaders in Christian work that the vigorous prosecution of missions is necessary to the preservation of the church, and especially to the preservation of its spiritual power. But this fact has not yet gripped the rank and file of the membership of the church, as it certainly must before there can come to the church as a whole that vigor and depth of spiritual

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

life of which it is capable, and which it must have in order to be the power that it ought to be in the world.

In our day, however, there are more missions to which Christians must address themselves than that of giving Christ to the heathen. Society is in need of the godly home, of civic righteousness, of political honor, of economic justice, of commercial integrity, and, in all of these relations, of men who are keepers and defenders of their weaker brothers.

(3) The third of these truths—that of redemptive sacrifice—Christians have ever connected too exclusively with the person of Christ, forgetful of the fact that to be a Christian is to incarnate in one's own life this cardinal principle of Christ's life. Christians to-day must come to see that no Christian should live in luxury while Christ's cause, in whatever phase of it, is in poverty; that no Christian should live in unconcern while Christ's cause is in need; that no Christian should secure or hold public office by compromising principles, and through failure to achieve those beneficent ends for which the office was designed; and that no Christian should achieve success in

The Book of Jonah

business under conditions which work injustice to any, or in any way degrade the lives of others. Redemptive sacrifice means that one throw himself into the breach and be the sufferer, the giver, the spender, the advocate where the needs of others require it. One has well said that Christ comes to us, not with a redeeming doctrine, but as a redeeming person. The Christian also must be one who lives and works, not only with Christ's teaching about redemption upon his lips, but as a redeeming personality.

xi

The Work of the Prophets

XI

1. The Prophets

THE prophet is not one who foretells only, but one who speaks for another. Moses had Aaron as his prophet. (Exod. 7: 1.) To Jeremiah the Lord said: "Thou shalt be as my mouth" (Jer. 15: 19), that is, the one who speaks my words. Elijah slew four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, men who were the representatives and authoritative teachers of Baal. In the church at Antioch there were "prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul" (Acts 13: 1). "Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words" (Acts 15: 32).

The Old Testament prophet was one who spoke for God. His speech might be the interpretation of a dream, as when Daniel

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnezzar; a rebuke for disobedience, as when Samuel rebuked Saul; upbraiding for sin, as when Nathan upbraided David; advice or warning in political affairs, as when Jeremiah advised and warned Josiah; cheer in discouragement, as in the glowing visions of Ezekiel; a picture of the coming redemption, as in the last chapters of Isaiah; or any other word that God would speak through those whom he called and sent to speak in his name.

While foretelling was not a large element in prophetic work, it was an element by no means to be overlooked. Matthew constantly quotes the prophets, and urges the fulfilment of prophecy as evidence that Jesus was the Christ. In the synagogue at Nazareth Christ himself, after reading from Isaiah, closed the book and said: "To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21). As Christ walked with the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, he interpreted to them the things in Moses and the prophets and in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (Luke 24:27.) And when he appeared suddenly in the room where the Twelve were gathered

The Work of the Prophets

after his resurrection, he assured them that all things concerning him which were written in Moses and the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled. (Luke 24:44.) It is evident, therefore, that while foretelling is only a small element in the work of the prophets, it is a very important element.

When mention is made of the Old Testament prophets we usually think of the great and true prophets—Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and several others. While these great and true prophets are the only ones that demand serious study, we shall better understand their position and work if we consider for a moment the history of what may be called the prophetic order.

It was the custom of heathen kings to consult the gods through wise men—diviners, augurs, enchanter, sorcerers, charmers, consulters of familiar spirits, wizards, necromancers, in fact, through all who possessed any knowledge of occult arts. Such were the men whom Pharaoh asked to interpret his dream before Joseph was called to interpret it; whom Nebuchadnezzar asked to interpret his dream before Daniel was called; whom Pharaoh required to du-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

plicate the signs wrought by Moses when he went to deliver Israel from Egypt. It will be recalled that when the Spirit of the Lord left King Saul, he consulted the witch of Endor.

Contrary to this heathen custom, Moses declares that God's people shall not consult augury, sorcery, wizardry, and such like; but that the Lord God shall raise up unto them a prophet from among their brethren, into whose mouth God shall put his own words. If that prophet shall speak what God does not speak, or if he shall speak in the name of other gods, he shall die. (Deut. 18: 10f.) We see then that somewhat loosely attached to the courts of heathen kings, there were certain prophetic orders of "wise men," called by different names; and that from these orders Israel was commanded wholly to depart, and to depend for guidance upon prophets whom God should raise up and authorize to speak in his name.

In Samuel's time, about one thousand years before Christ, prophetic guilds were found in Israel, called "Sons of the Prophets." The heads of the guilds were called "fathers"; the members, "sons." The history of these guilds is not wholly

The Work of the Prophets

clear, nor is their character altogether certain. But there is no question that in Israel there arose large companies of prophets, who were more or less attached to the sanctuaries, and who were consulted by the kings in both public and private affairs. On one occasion King Ahab called together four hundred of these prophets to secure their advice about going to war.

It is not altogether clear how these numerous prophets were supported. The prophets of Baal were said to "sit at Jezebel's table." And it is probable that to some extent the prophets of Israel enjoyed the patronage of the kings, at least to the extent of receiving gifts when they rendered service. This is indicated by the fact that when Naaman went to Elisha to be healed of his leprosy he carried a gift. And although the great prophet would accept neither pay nor gift, Gehazi, his servant, ran after Naaman on his departure, and asked a gift for two of the sons of the prophets, who had come to his master. This indicates that the sons of the prophets were in the habit of receiving gifts. Again, when Amos prophesied at Bethel, the priest of the sanctuary, being displeased with his

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

prophecy, said: "O thou seer, go, flee thou away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there" (Amos 7:12). This would indicate that prophesying was at least a vocation by which one could earn his living.

So much of historic background will help us to understand the distinction between true and false prophets. God did not call, nor did he speak through, all who attached themselves to these prophetic guilds. Some prophesied smooth things for pay, prophesying as from the Lord what would please the king. The four hundred whom Ahab consulted about going to war, said: "Go up, for God will deliver it (Ramoth-gilead) into the hand of the king" (2 Chron. 18:5). They knew that Ahab wanted to go to war and desired their approval in doing so. These were false prophets. Jehoshaphat, however, who was consulting with Ahab, was suspicious of these smooth-tongued sycophants, and inquired whether the king had other prophets. "There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of Jehovah," said Ahab, "but I hate him; for he never prophesieth good concerning me, but always evil. . . Let not

The Work of the Prophets

the king say so" (2 Chron. 18:7), said Jehoshaphat; and when Micaiah was called he delivered the message that God had given him, which was a prophecy exactly contrary to that of the four hundred false prophets. This is an example of the true prophet.

The prophets of Israel whom God called and through whom he spoke, came from all classes of society, some from within the prophetic guilds, some from without. Isaiah was of the royal family; Jeremiah and Ezekiel were of the priestly order; while Amos was a shepherd and one of the common people.

Among these true prophets there were those who by reason of their greatness rose above the others, just as Peter, James, and John rose above the other disciples; and Paul above the apostles; and Savonarola, Luther, and Knox above most preachers and reformers; and the Wesleys, Whitefield, and Moody above most evangelists; and Washington and Lincoln above most statesmen. Such prophets were Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel; and also Amos, Micah, Hosea, and others of the minor prophets.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

geon. Christ gathers much history into a single sentence when he says to the scribes and Pharisees: "Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them" (Luke 11:47).

(2) Social reformers. The prophets were also social reformers or preachers of righteousness. Just as in the Christian centuries, when conditions in the medieval church became intolerable, there arose a Luther to cry out against abuses; and when in modern times a chilling paralysis crept over religious life, there arose an Edwards and the Wesleys to recall the people to more vital godliness; so also when Israel turned to idols, ignored the teachings of Jehovah, and forgot morals, prophets arose to denounce her sins, and to recall her to her duty and her mission. It is in such times that Micah accuses the judges of rendering decisions for reward, the priests of teaching for hire, and the prophets themselves of divining for money (Micah 3:11), and declares that because of such sins Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall become a ruin, and the mountain on which it stands a forest. (Micah 3:12.) It is in such times that Isaiah says: "Jerusalem is ruined, and

The Work of the Prophets

Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against Jehovah" (Isa. 3:8). In such times also Amos pleads: "Seek good, and not evil. . . Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: . . Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5: 14, 15, 24).

(3) Religious reformers. The prophets were also religious reformers. Not only did the people frequently turn aside to the worship of Baal and other gods, but there were times when even the religious leaders became degenerate. Their perfunctory sacrifices were sometimes the merest formalism, for the heart had gone out of worship. The priests were corrupt and the prophets were mercenary. Civil offenses were atoned for by the payment of a money fine, so that a man felt free to sin as much as he had money to atone for; and it was a means of enrichment to the corrupt priests that the people sinned as much as possible. As always in degenerate times, religion became superstition, and in proportion as it did so, the people became corrupt. In the midst of such conditions the prophets strove for reformation by connecting religion with

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

2. *The Work of the Prophets*

From what has already been said it will be seen that the work of the prophets may be conveniently described as that of statesmen, social reformers, religious reformers, literary men, and foretellers of future events.

(1) Statesmen. The prophets were, first of all, statesmen. Since the Jewish nation was a theocracy, the king held his throne under God. And the prophet was God's spokesman, through whom the divine will was made known. To the king, therefore, these men came, saying, "Thus saith the Lord." According to the prophet's word the king was to go to battle, or refrain from battle; to rebel against the nation that oppressed Israel, or to submit to oppression; to make alliance with a neighboring nation, or to refuse such alliance; to defend the city, or to submit to the enemy; and always to cast down the high places, turn from his sins, and trust in Jehovah his God. It was as a patriot-statesman that Samuel reproved Saul for returning from battle with plunder that he was commanded to destroy; that Elijah reproved Ahab for Baal-worship;

The Work of the Prophets

that Isaiah warned Ahaz not to seek alliance with Assyria; and that Jeremiah under Josiah instituted many reforms. Repeatedly we find these prophets insisting to the king that if he is obedient to Jehovah his throne will be established; but if not, he will be carried into captivity.

On account of this statesmanship relation to the king the great prophets arise at special political crises. Thus when Assyria is threatening Israel, Amos prophesies that on account of her sins Israel shall be overthrown and taken captive. When the king of Judah is being urged by other powers to resist Assyria, Isaiah warns the king not to make an alliance with Assyria, lest that alliance become an entering wedge of oppression. Some of the prophecies of Jeremiah were uttered when the king of Babylon was besieging Jerusalem.

In this statesmanship relation to the king the prophets are magnificent in their loyalty to God, and to the true interests of Israel. For their heroic patriotism and their far-sighted statesmanship they often suffered. Elijah was pursued by the wrathful Jezebel. Jeremiah was rewarded for his faithful warnings by confinement in a foul dun-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

geon. Christ gathers much history into a single sentence when he says to the scribes and Pharisees: "Woe unto you! for ye build the tombs of the prophets, and your fathers killed them" (Luke 11:47).

(2) Social reformers. The prophets were also social reformers or preachers of righteousness. Just as in the Christian centuries, when conditions in the medieval church became intolerable, there arose a Luther to cry out against abuses; and when in modern times a chilling paralysis crept over religious life, there arose an Edwards and the Wesleys to recall the people to more vital godliness; so also when Israel turned to idols, ignored the teachings of Jehovah, and forgot morals, prophets arose to denounce her sins, and to recall her to her duty and her mission. It is in such times that Micah accuses the judges of rendering decisions for reward, the priests of teaching for hire, and the prophets themselves of divining for money (Micah 3:11), and declares that because of such sins Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem shall become a ruin, and the mountain on which it stands a forest. (Micah 3:12.) It is in such times that Isaiah says: "Jerusalem is ruined, and

The Work of the Prophets

Judah is fallen; because their tongue and their doings are against Jehovah" (Isa. 3:8). In such times also Amos pleads: "Seek good, and not evil. . . Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: . . Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos 5: 14, 15, 24).

(3) Religious reformers. The prophets were also religious reformers. Not only did the people frequently turn aside to the worship of Baal and other gods, but there were times when even the religious leaders became degenerate. Their perfunctory sacrifices were sometimes the merest formalism, for the heart had gone out of worship. The priests were corrupt and the prophets were mercenary. Civil offenses were atoned for by the payment of a money fine, so that a man felt free to sin as much as he had money to atone for; and it was a means of enrichment to the corrupt priests that the people sinned as much as possible. As always in degenerate times, religion became superstition, and in proportion as it did so, the people became corrupt. In the midst of such conditions the prophets strove for reformation by connecting religion with

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

righteousness, and by insisting that forms of worship were empty and useless without right conduct. Thus Samuel insists that "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22); and Amos, looking into the very eyes of the servile priests, represents God as saying: "I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies" (Amos 5:21). Hosea, to the same effect, declares in the name of Jehovah: "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings" (Hosea 6:6). And Isaiah, looking upon the multitude of sacrifices which the people bring, says: "Bring no more vain oblations. . . . When ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you. . . . Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:13f.). With many such passages of reproof, warning, and denunciation the writings of the prophets are filled. These messengers of God insist that worship be conjoined with right conduct.

The Work of the Prophets

(4) Literary men. The prophets and also the priests were the literary men of Israel. The fact has already been mentioned that of late years biblical scholars have rendered a great service to Bible knowledge by separating the interwoven narratives from each other, and bringing them as nearly as possible to their original form. The scholars call some of these original narratives prophetic, others priestly; that is, some were written by prophets, others by priests. Who wrote the story of creation? the story of the flood? the stories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph? Prophets and priests. The names of many of them are not known, but their work bears the stamp of their characters, breathes their spirit, and reveals their point of view.

Doubtless the book of Job is best classified as a drama. Beyond question it was written by a prophet, for it has philosophic depth, and a freshness and pertinency to life that are perennial. Many of the psalms are by unknown authors, but they express that spiritual ardor, that abiding faith, and that deep yearning after God, which are characteristic of the prophets; and some of

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the psalms, as our Lord indicated, have foretelling significance. (Matt. 22:44.) The writings with which we commonly associate the prophets are, of course, those books of the Bible which bear their names, and which we know as prophecies. The majority of these men of God, however, including the two great prophets, Elijah and Elisha, left no writings. But from the prophetic literature which has come down to us it is evident that the prophets were to Israel the interpreters of God's will, the rebukers of sin, the teachers of morals, the instructors of worship, the counselors of kings, the cheerers of her desponding hours, and the "lifters-up of her head" when she was crushed under the heel of tyranny.

(5) Foretellers. The remaining element in the work of the prophets was that of foretelling. We place this last in order only because it is last in time in the sense that it increases in emphasis and amount toward the close of the prophetic era.

a. This foretelling element first became definite for Israel with God's promise to Abraham that he would bless him and make him a blessing. This was a foretelling of

The Work of the Prophets

great significance, and reaching far into the future. Israel never ceased to believe that under God she had a great national destiny. The most continuous and insistent plea of the prophets was for that righteousness which God demanded, in order that God might cease to defeat the nation in war, recall her people from captivity, and fulfil through them his purpose of establishing a kingdom of righteousness upon the earth. But Israel did not heed her prophets; her people forsook God's commandments; and neighboring nations led her into captivity.

b. When at length there seemed no hope of the nation's realizing the purpose of God, the prophets began to speak of a "remnant" and to hold out hope that although the nation failed to realize God's purpose, the remnant would succeed. Isaiah says: "Except Jehovah of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom" (Isa. 1:9); that is, utterly destroyed. He insists that the day will come when a remnant of Israel shall not lean upon their oppressors, but upon the Lord (Isa. 10:20), and that God shall bring back that remnant with a mighty hand and make a highway for them. (Isa. 11:16.) That

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

is, God shall ultimately realize his kingdom of righteousness on the earth through a small remnant of Israel, a remnant that shall give heed to God's commands.

c. The later prophets constantly speak of "that day," the "day of the Lord," the "great day." They are looking for God to come as he has never yet come, to come in a way that should mark the time of his coming as peculiarly his own.

One cannot find in prophecy any clearly defined program indicating when or how the Lord was to come, or what the great day was to be like, except that it was to usher in a reign of righteousness and bring a condition of peace. Jeremiah says: "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 31:34). "Holiness to the Lord" was to be written on the bells of the horses. The lion and the lamb were to lie down together. Although no clearly defined program is here announced, yet there was a profound conviction, and an undying faith, that God was coming as he had never come before to

The Work of the Prophets

produce a condition of peace and righteousness hitherto unknown.

d. At length this remnant of Israel which the prophets foresee, becomes individualized and idealized into the "righteous king," and the "servant of Jehovah." Jeremiah says: "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land . . . and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness" (Jer. 23: 5, 6). Isaiah, prophesying of the kingly office of the Coming One, declares: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9: 6, 7). And the second Isaiah, speaking of the righteous servant of Jehovah, says: "I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth" (Isa. 49: 6). And speaking further of the work that this righteous servant was to do, he

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

says: "I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench; he will bring forth justice in truth . . . I Jehovah . . . give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house" (Isa. 42: 1-7). And the same prophet, speaking of the method by which the righteous servant of Jehovah shall do his work, says: "He was despised, and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: . . . Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; . . . But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . He was oppressed, yet when he was afflicted he opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (Isa. 53: 3-7).

Thus we see how the prophets of the Old

The Work of the Prophets

Testament looked steadily and expectantly toward the coming of God to establish his kingdom on the earth; how they looked upon righteousness as the condition of God's coming, and also as the ever-increasing fact among men when that kingdom should be established. We see how their view finally centered upon the servant of Jehovah until in their teaching they drew a perfect picture of the Christ, in whom prophecy finds fulfilment, not only as to the kingdom of God and its righteousness, but also as to the character of him who was to usher in that kingdom, and even as to the sacrificial death by which it was to be established.

£111

The Nature of Messianic
Prophecy

XII

MANY passages of Scripture might be cited, which, until recent years, were thought to have no other significance than that of pointing to Jesus Christ. Such passages as: "He (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy head (the serpent's), and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15), and "The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5), as well as others of like import, were held to be Messianic. Such passages, while undoubtedly prophetic of Christ, may also have a broader significance. Indeed, it may be safely presumed that every text in the Old Testament claimed as prophetic is a message, not only for the future, but also for the time in which it was spoken, and for some immediate need.

Old Testament prophecy is something far more comprehensive than anything embodied in a few texts. All are familiar with

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the fact that the whole history of Israel is a preparation for Christ. But a moment's reflection will make evident the fact that whatever is preparatory must also be prophetic. The excavated cellar, corded bricks, and piled lumber are prophetic of the house to be erected. Store windows filled with toys, and additional clerks to serve customers, are prophetic of Christmas.

When considering the prophetic character of the Old Testament it is necessary to bear in mind what Christ is, viz., *the means by which a perfected humanity is to be secured*. Throughout the entire history of Israel her hope of a perfected humanity never changed, but her conception of the means by which it was to be secured changed many times; and each change was made necessary by the converging lines of her history, which at length came to be definitely focused upon the God-man, Jesus Christ.

The nature of prophecy in Israel cannot be fully understood without first inquiring for the Jew's fundamental conception of humanity. The answer is found in Genesis, where, in the first chapters, Adam and Eve are created perfect, placed in a delightful garden, given dominion over all created

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

things, and made to walk and talk with God in happy fellowship. This was Israel's conception of a perfect humanity. From this perfect pair it was, of course, expected that a perfect progeny would come. This expectation however failed. Under temptation the holy pair fell and sin increased until Cain became guilty of murder. As time went on conditions became worse, until at the time of the flood all men are wicked except Noah. Thus far in the record the conception of a perfected humanity has not wavered, nor has the hope of recovering it wavered; but righteousness by descent proves a failure, and necessarily the means of securing a perfected humanity undergoes change.

A new beginning is made with righteous Noah. But Noah, though righteous, is not the innocent man that Adam was; he was rather a man experienced and disciplined by a God-ruled world. The flood taught men the terrible consequences of sin; and it was presumed that men would be righteous when they reflected on the ruin sin had wrought. Men, however, soon forgot, sin again became dominant, until in the narrative of the Tower of Babel the race is

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

represented as scattered to the four corners of the earth, and prone to evil. Again all means for securing a perfected humanity have failed; yet the ideal toward which all endeavors are bent remains the same. The seed of the woman is to bruise the serpent's head, but how the bruising is to be successfully achieved does not yet appear.

So far, according to the record, prophecy has been on the broadest possible lines, dealing with the whole race, not only as end, but also as means. There are as yet neither nations nor individuals selected for the purpose of redeeming mankind. This part of the Bible record is not usually regarded as prophetic, yet beyond question there lies deep within it the hope of the perfection of the race, a hope which the Jew of the Bible never for a moment relinquishes.

In the call of Abraham the broad lines, so far as they relate to the means of redemption, begin to converge and to become more clearly defined. Abraham was called out, even from his own family, and set apart that from him might spring a righteous nation, as numerous as the stars and as multitudinous as the sands, through

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

which the whole race was to be redeemed and perfected in righteousness. In Abraham all the families of the earth were to be blessed. Here again the conception of a perfected humanity remains unchanged, but the means of securing that perfection has changed radically. God is now at work, not as before, equally in the whole race, but especially in and through a chosen people. Israel was to be a redeeming nation, a nation of priests standing between God and men, receiving in a special manner from God, and ministering in a special manner to men. For this purpose the priestly nation was not only chosen, but disciplined by the bondage in Egypt, by the wanderings in the wilderness, by the conquest of Canaan, and placed at the crossroads of the nations, until by war, trade, and numerous captivities, the knowledge of Israel's God is wide-spread.

But notwithstanding God's discipline and use of Israel, there is again seeming failure in Israel's mission. A brief hundred years spans the duration of the united kingdom. That kingdom, which was set up under Saul and rose to its zenith under David, declined to its fall at the end of Solomon's

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

reign. The armies of Assyria and Babylon soon crushed the divided kingdom, and the people were carried into captivity. Thus, in its work of redeeming humanity, the kingdom failed. Yet it did not fail, as we shall see. It is as when Gideon's army was too large for the Lord to use, and one company after another was sent home until only three hundred remained. In her captivity, however, Israel's hope of redeeming humanity was not abandoned, but her conception of means was again radically changed.

The nation had not been long in Babylonian captivity when her prophets began to declare that a remnant should return to Jerusalem to rebuild the holy city and the temple. By permission of Cyrus a remnant did return, and the prophets began to teach, not according to the former belief, that redemption was to come to the race through the whole nation, but rather through this small remnant. Out of the stress of captivity is developed a new conception of the means of redemption, a conception as much narrower than the one which preceded it as the remnant was narrower than the nation. Thus Israel's

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

changing conception of the means of redemption exhibits converging lines. First it embraced the whole race, then a chosen nation, and later simply a righteous remnant.

The lines, however, were to converge still more, for the prophets did not hold the idea of a redeeming remnant long before an individualizing process began, by which the idea of the suffering remnant soon passed into that of the "Suffering Servant of Jehovah," "Immanuel," "Prince of Peace," "The Anointed of the Lord," the "Elect One," the "Righteous One," the "Holy Lord," the "Son of God," the "Messiah," and other like personifications, some of which are found in the Apocrypha. All eyes were now turned toward the future, so that when Christ came not only the Jews were expecting one to come, but the Gentile nations as well.

Thus we see that Christ was foretold not simply by a few scattered passages of Scripture, but by the whole trend and sweep of Jewish thought and history, which run on toward and converge upon the Saviour. The passages which more particularly point to Christ are but the bursting forth of the

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

deep and continuous consciousness of the nation. Jewish history reached its goal in Christ. Upon him the nation's thought, conviction, consciousness of mission, and world-wide expectation were focused. In him at length the means by which the race was to be redeemed and perfected came to clearness of expression, fulness of definition, and was manifested to all the world. It is worthy of note that precisely in keeping with these converging lines of redemptive history is the fact that the gospel was finally given to the Gentiles by a few specially chosen and trained Israelites, whom we call apostles.

To recapitulate: The fundamental Jewish conception of life was that of a perfected humanity, living on a garden-like earth, and enjoying full fellowship with God. The fact of sin made redemption necessary before perfection could be realized. From Adam to Noah the means employed to secure perfection was descent from a righteous pair, but this method failed. From Noah to Abraham the method was descent from a righteous man (Noah, see Gen. 7:1) plus the instruction which came from the devastations of sin as seen in the flood; but

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

this method also failed, as is evident from the scattering of the people from Babel. In like manner Israel as a whole failed to become a redeeming nation. Even the suffering, sin-bearing remnant failed. At last the individualized remnant, though called by various names, produced wide-spread expectation of the Coming One, and that Coming One was Christ, the Redeemer and Perfecter of humanity.

I have used the word "failed" only for clearness and to avoid confusing the mind by dealing with too many ideas at the same time. In any method that marks progress, however, there is really no failure. The kindergarten does not fail, though it does not perform the work of the grades. The graded school does not fail, though it does not give a high-school diploma. The high school does not fail, though it does not grant a college degree. Each school marks a step in advance, and each prepares for that which is to follow. So also with every stage of progress in revelation and redemption. Complete success will be realized only when the work of Christ is finished, but every step in Israel's history, as also every stage of her thought, was

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

both a preparation for him and a prophecy of his coming.

In connection with this conception of Messianic prophecy, it is important to note two additional facts, which run like golden threads of prophetic foresight through the whole fabric of Israel's history. The first is the intimate relation of the divine and human in Israel's life, which is prophetic of the God-man; the second is the remarkable basis of religious ideas and ethical convictions of which Israel became possessed, a basis which marked the fulness of time for Christ's coming, and rendered his teachings intelligible and effective.

1. The intimate relation of the divine and human in Israel's life is indicated by every circumstance and teaching that points to the facts of revelation and inspiration. Not to go farther back than the patriarchs, many people migrated from Mesopotamia to the west, but Abraham migrated at the call of God, and with the consciousness of a God-given mission. Many slaves were sold into Egypt, but Joseph was conscious that God was with him, and was realizing a purpose through him. Many had been reared in the court of Pharaoh, but Moses was conscious

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

of God's call to deliver his people. Israel never forgot her bondage in Egypt, her discipline in the wilderness, her entrance into Canaan, and her conquest of the land; but the one thing uppermost in her remembrance was the presence and help of Jehovah and the consciousness that by the power of God she was achieving divine ends. From Israel's later history it is evident that a few more prosperous reigns like those of David and Solomon, or those of Jeroboam II in Israel and Uzziah in Judah, would have destroyed the spiritual life of the nation and caused Jehovah to depart from her. It required disaster—famine, pestilence, defeat in war, captivity, and all but destruction of national life—to keep Israel close to God, to hold her steadily on her way, and to develop in her the necessary redemptive ideas. In all her experiences the uppermost fact in Israel's consciousness was her connection with God, the merging of her interests with God's interests, the subjection of her will to God's will, and the confidence that she under God was to be the savior of the world. Nothing in her life did she consider apart from God; nothing did she hope to achieve except in conformity with the will

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

of Jehovah. Such an identification of the human with the divine is prophetic of the human and divine in Christ, and in Christ the union came to full expression. Were it pertinent to the subject at this point, it could easily be shown that the complete union of the divine and human in Christ is in its turn prophetic of the ultimate complete union of the divine and human in the race. Christ is but the "first-fruits."

2. The adequacy of the preparation for Christ is evidenced by the conceptions of redemption which the Jews held ere Christ was born:

(1) God was regarded as a savior, one who redeemed his people from all trouble, and cleansed them from all sin.

(2) The suffering of the righteous for the wicked became a familiar fact, and by the prophets was held to be God's method in salvation. Tenacious, indeed, was the idea that suffering meant sin in the sufferer, but the book of Job was written to combat this very conception, and in Isaiah's prophecies vicarious suffering was clearly taught.

(3) The fact that the few were to suffer for the many was also familiar to the later prophets. This idea seems to have devel-

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

oped directly out of the Babylonian captivity. Grasping this idea, the prophets hastened to individualize the few and to teach that the "Coming One" was to bear the sins of all.

(4) Redemption was to embrace all men. Notwithstanding the narrowness of the Judaism of Christ's time, the higher spirits in Israel never lost sight of this fact. It is found in Jonah's preaching to Gentile Nineveh, in the prophet's vision of all nations hastening to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel, and in many glowing pictures of universal peace and righteousness.

(5) Peace was to come to the world not by the sword, not by powerful armies, but by one who should smite with the rod of his mouth, by wisdom, by love, and by the knowledge of God.

(6) The righteousness of men was not to be compelled by outward law, but was to spring from the impulses of the heart, where the law should be written. The ultimate and effective conquest was to be the conquest of the heart.

(7) Moreover, in the great salvation that was to come, God was to take the initiative.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

When Israel's national life was blotted out, and the future was filled with gloom, Jeremiah looked for Jehovah to take the initiative in teaching his people, forgiving their sins, bringing them from their captivity, and reestablishing them as a nation. Already the idea is dominant not only that man seeks God, but that God seeks man.

(8) Long and tenaciously did the Jews cling to the conviction of national salvation, salvation on the ground that they were the "seed of Abraham." When Moses pleaded that he might be blotted out of God's book in order that the nation might be saved, God answered: "Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book" (Exod. 32:33). In this sentence is found the conception of individual sin and punishment, a conception, as the passage indicates, closely connected with national prosperity, and the realization of national hopes. Although the idea of reviving the nation never perished from the Jewish heart, the individual came more and more into prominence, especially in the minds of those not in authority, so that when Christ came and dealt with the individual, the transition from that of national

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

to that of individual salvation had already been made comparatively easy.

(9) Even the conception of a future existence, in which sin was to be punished and righteousness rewarded, is found in the Apocrypha.

Thus it is seen that no conception of truth necessary as a foundation for Christ's work was lacking. All the ideas thus mentioned, as well as many others, had been revealed to the Jews, and by them wrought out into experience. All were a preparation for the Christ, and each was a prophecy of him. Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem the prophets declared that he was to be the righteous one, the humble one, the suffering one, the serving one, the redeeming one, the triumphant one, the ruling one, the one who should save his people from their sins, fill the earth with righteousness as the waters fill the sea, and transform the deserts of life into gardens.

The prophetic conceptions thus briefly outlined have peculiar significance for the modern mind, for the continuity of these conceptions appears in our century in three outstanding facts: The hope of social regeneration, belief in the union of the human

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

and the divine, and the conviction that Jesus Christ is the source of social renewal.

First, the hope of social regeneration. In Christ's time the Jews had all but abandoned hope of regeneration for the Gentiles, a hope which at most had never been widespread among them. Christ's apostles, and those who came after them for three hundred years, looked for a speedy second coming of Christ and the consummation of all mundane affairs. After the Roman Empire became nominally Christian and Christianity was well-nigh swallowed up in worldliness, the more devout spirits, in hope of achieving personal salvation, abandoned society for the hermit's cell and the cloister. The succeeding thousand years was a time of unrest and upheaval, including the Revival of Learning, the Reformation, the making of theologies, the developing of philosophies, the multiplication of inventions, the prosecution of exploration and colonization, with corresponding spiritual unrest, in which dominant aims were, on the part of Catholics, the integrity of the Church; on the part of Protestants, the integrity of doctrine; and on the part of both, personal salvation in the world to come.

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

Ours, on the other hand, is the social century. Its dominant spiritual purpose is social regeneration. We believe in personal salvation no less than former Christian centuries, but we believe that personal salvation can be secured only by one of Christ's spirit who loses his life in bettering his fellows. We also believe in the kingdom of God hereafter no less than former centuries, but we believe in building the kingdom of God here and now, and that only those who promote it here will enter it hereafter. In a word, our century, while holding in balance and proportion the dominant ideas which former centuries have wrought out one by one, has grasped anew and in a larger way the dominant conception of the Messianic teaching, viz., that humanity is to be perfected not in some other world, but in this world, and not in an isolated individual here or there, but as a whole. That this is the growing conception and the increasing passion of our age is manifest in our changing religious ideas, the increasing sensitiveness of our social conscience, our demand for civic righteousness and commercial integrity, and in numberless endeavors to benefit the masses.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

The second outstanding fact which closely unites the prophetic conceptions to the thinking of our century is the union of the human and divine. Philosophy has developed its theories of pluralism, dualism, and monism, each having passed through many phases. But no philosophy promises to find permanence in human thinking which denies the personality of the human spirit, the personality of the Creator of the human spirit, or the vital union of the two. And so in our philosophy to-day we are talking about the immanence of God in nature and man, about all the natural processes with which science deals being the immediate activity of the supernatural within the natural, about our world being at heart a spiritual world. After having weighed many philosophies in the balance only to find them wanting, we are coming again, only with a more comprehensive view, to the prophetic conception of the union of the divine and human as that union is seen consummated in the God-man, Christ Jesus, and as we believe it will ultimately be consummated in the race.

The third outstanding fact which connects the prophetic conceptions with our think-

The Nature of Messianic Prophecy

ing is the conviction that Jesus Christ is the source of social renewal. Our century is fairly bursting with emphasis upon this fact. "Back to Christ" has of late been a familiar and favorite watchword. Why back to Christ? Because the doctrines forged on the anvil of contending centuries will neither save individuals nor ameliorate human conditions. Both processes require the personal, living, and present Christ. And we must know Christ as he was in order to know him as he is, and in order to bring him into vital relations to present needs.

A practical and efficient Christianity is demanded of the church to-day, and why? Because our century cannot believe in a Christianity that saves an individual without inspiring that individual to do good to his fellows; and our century does believe that when Jesus Christ dominates the life of any man that man will inspire others to Christliness.

No Utopia has solved the social question, and the more earnestly social reformers have striven to ameliorate human conditions the more clearly have they seen that the fundamental need is the renewal of the human heart. The emphasis falls increas-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

ingly, therefore, upon Christ's redemption of the individual as a social method, and upon renewed society as a society of redeemed individuals.

Thus it appears that the controlling conceptions of the Old Testament Messianic teaching have come to be the dominant conceptions of our own day, with the perfection of humanity the dominant world-hope and the God-man the central world-fact.

£1111

Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy

XIII

IN the preceding chapter it was pointed out that Christ fulfilled prophecy, not only in the restricted sense of fulfilling specific predictions, but in the broad sense of fulfilling the whole trend and sweep of the Old Testament Scriptures. In Christ's Sermon on the Mount his repeated assertion, "But I say unto you," rings clear and strong over against the statement, "It hath been said by them of old time." He held the Old Testament as a half-truth destined to be completed by himself. Its partial ideas he supplements; its inadequate ideals he completes; its germinal truths he brings to bloom; its embryonic laws he brings to birth in general principles. In the Old Testament all the revelation is partial. In Christ all is complete. This fact is nowhere better seen than in a comparison of the early Bible narratives with the teachings of Christ. To this comparison we direct attention as follows:

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

1. The Comparison

(1) The great lesson of the narrative of creation is that Jehovah is Creator. In Christ the Creator becomes the Father; men are his children; and Father and children are bound together, or ought to be, by ties of tenderest love.

(2) In the narrative of the temptation Adam and Eve fail to stand the test and are driven from the presence of God, but the battle is not over. In our Lord man succeeds in the temptation struggle. And the success is not only Christ's individually, but through him the success of those who are his.

(3) In the story of Cain and Abel the demand is made that worship be united with right conduct. In Christ worship and right conduct are seen in indissoluble union. There is no place in his life where worship ends and conduct begins. All is worship; all is conduct. The two are completely merged. Christ was both Son of God and Son of man, and his Godward and manward relations were equally sacred. He worshiped God most ardently when he served men most devotedly.

Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy

(4) The narrative of the flood represented God as distinguishing between the righteous and the wicked, as separating one from the other, and as bringing each to different ends. But the teaching of the narrative was only in embryo, for the end of the wicked was physical death, while the reward of the righteous was continued life and blessings. This teaching Christ completes by lifting it into the spiritual and eternal. He makes clear the fact that the wicked die a spiritual death, that the righteous live eternally, and that between the two a great gulf is fixed, across which there is no passing.

(5) Abraham was an obedient man who never questioned God, and never counted the cost of obedience. But Christ brought obedience to its highest and fullest expression by paying the highest price for it, viz., by giving up his life on the cross. And Christ's obedience was not like Abraham's, for physical and temporal blessings, but in the highest sphere and for the noblest ends.

(6) Jacob was God's wrestler, the man who wanted God's blessings, though he wrestled against securing them in God's way. Beside Jacob, wrestling all night with

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the unnamed one at the ford of Jabbok, one should place Christ, wrestling alone in the Garden of Gethsemane; for in each case it is the wrestling of one who desires to obey God, but marvels at God's requirement. In each case the wrestling is over the same problem, though in different form, the problem of God's ways with one whom he would use for the redemption of his fellow men. Christ's wrestling in Gethsemane is the climax of a struggle which began in his temptation in the wilderness, and from which doubtless he was never free. "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done," spoken in his bloody sweat, has ever since been, and doubtless will ever be, the pattern of wrestling and submission for every man as he faces the mysteries of God's ways as God seeks to use him for the redemption of men.

(7) In the life of Joseph we saw the faithfulness of God meeting the faithfulness of man. But in the teaching and life of Christ this truth receives its fullest expression. How could it be better uttered than in the words: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered. . . Ye are of more value than many sparrows. . . If then God

Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy

so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 10:30, 31; Luke 12:28.) How could one more fully trust God's faithfulness than did Christ, when on his way to death he bade Peter put up his sword, saying: "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26:53.) And how could the teaching be better verified than in the fact that though Christ went to the cross, God made that cross a throne. Our Lord was buried in the tomb, but God raised him up, and proved him to be his only begotten Son by the resurrection from the dead. Paul's soul kindles with the fact that God hath highly exalted Christ, who was faithful unto death, even the death of the cross, and hath given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. Never was there faithfulness in man like the faithfulness of Christ; and no expression of God's faithfulness surpasses or equals his faithfulness in raising Christ from the dead and enthroning him in the heart of the world.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(8) In the account of Israel's deliverance from Egypt we come for the first time upon the fact of redemption. The form is crude, for it was redemption primarily from physical bondage. In Jesus Christ both the idea and the fact of redemption stand complete. The idea is that of redemption from sin, which includes everything from which man needs to be redeemed, everything physical, mental, social, spiritual. The fact is the all-sufficient Redeemer, whom God sent into the world "that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16); and who himself said, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4); and when about to die on the cross, again declared, "It is finished" (John 19:30).

If we now enumerate the teachings of these early narratives which have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ, we are surprised that so little that is really fundamental to spiritual life is wanting:

a. God, the Creator, is our Father. *b.* The battle in one's soul can be won through Jesus Christ our Lord. *c.* The worship of God the Father must include brotherly treatment of our fellow men. *d.* The righteous

Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy

and the wicked shall be separated, and shall meet different ends. *e.* God abundantly blesses him who does not hesitate to pay the price of obedience. *f.* The blessings to which we aspire must be secured in God's way. *g.* God is faithful to those who are faithful to him, and none need hesitate to trust him, even unto death. *h.* God redeems men by sending a Redeemer who must suffer for others, and must bear their sins in his own body and in his own heart.

2. Christ's Faith

It only remains to point out Christ's faith in the final consummation of his redemptive work, and the partial realization of that faith in history.

While Christ taught clearly that the Old Testament was fulfilled in himself, comparatively little emphasis fell from his own lips upon this fact. His look was not backward, but forward; his emphasis, not upon the completion of the old order, but upon the beginning of a new order. His kingdom was "at hand," that is, just beginning. It was like a mustard-seed, the beginning of a gradual and strong growth; like yeast placed in meal, the beginning of a leavening

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

process. The sending of a few apostles to evangelize a world was a beginning. Such facts—a few only of many that might be adduced—clearly indicate Christ's forward look and confident expectation.

Precisely what Christ hoped for, and had confidence in, was, as with the prophets of the Old Testament, a redeemed and perfected humanity. He sent forth his apostles to preach himself as the Redeemer who had power to forgive men and to renew their hearts. The perfection to which men were to be brought was the perfection seen in him. Men were to come to him, take his yoke, learn of him, follow him, love as he loved, sacrifice as he sacrificed, obey as he obeyed, and minister as he ministered. They were to be meek like him, like him to find God's will as necessary as food, and like him to make God's rule among men their first interest and constant effort. Beyond question Christ looked forward to the time when all men should be thus minded.

Just as in the Old Testament the redemptive process seemed periodically to meet with defeat, and even the conception of a perfected humanity to be lost sight of, only however to burst forth again enlarged, both

Christ the Fulfiller of Prophecy

in conception and in sphere of endeavor ; so in the centuries since Christ, the processes of redeeming society have seemed periodically to lag, and even to turn back, while the fundamental conception of Christ was all but lost sight of ; yet after each such submergence Christ's conception of a redeemed humanity has burst upon the minds of men enlarged and clarified.

That one himself is to be redeemed and ultimately perfected is the least of a twentieth-century Christian's thought ; just as the fact that Christ was to be glorified was the least of Christ's thought. To-day the Christian who is alive to the things of Christ, over and above the great fact of personal salvation, even over and above all efforts to bring men to personal acceptance of Christ, is thinking of and striving for social redemption—the redemption of business, politics, laws, institutions ; the redemption of men's aims, ambitions, desires, and strivings.

Volumes would be required to detail the redemptive process during the Christian centuries. It is sufficient for our purpose here to indicate a few of the great evils to which Christian civilization is now a stranger, or

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

which it has placed under the social ban: Slavery, serfdom, wars of conquest, pillage, exposure of infants, gladiatorial contests, adultery, gambling, drunkenness, prostitution, and many others.

God's purpose to perfect humanity, which is traceable in the Old Testament, the New Testament, and in the Christian centuries, was never so evident as it is to-day; and never were so many and such varied forces operative to achieve this "one continuous purpose." The prophecy of our century is that Christ shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied, and that the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Of this fact the modern Christian can feel reasonably certain. And surely it ought to fire his soul with enthusiasm for the Redeemer with whom he is at work, and for the work which the Redeemer and the redeemed are doing together.

ÆTH

**The Significance of Jesus Christ
for the Modern Man**

XIV

IN the foregoing chapters Christ is seen to be the consummation of the Old Testament, and to have come in the fulness of time. It will not be deemed out of place, therefore, to add to a discussion which holds Christ as its goal, a concluding chapter on "The Significance of Jesus Christ for the Modern Man."

I. The Fulness of Time

It may be asked, What constituted the "fulness of time" for the coming of Christ? This question is nowhere answered in the Scriptures. It is customary to find the answer in the Hebrew preparation, with its well-developed ideas of God, man, and duty; in the Greek preparation of language, literature, and philosophical ideas; and in the Roman preparation of national unification, roads, laws, and government. But there is a fulness of time more vital to Christ's work than any of these, and more

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

important for the kingdom of God in the world than all of them, a fulness of time which lies at the center of the historic process, and points the way to Christ's world-significance.

For many the magic word of the twentieth century is "evolution." The application of the theory of evolution not only to natural phenomena, but to human history as well, has created great disturbance in religious thought by changing somewhat the theological view-point.

It need not be pointed out here that the evolutionary principle, even in the physical world, is far from proved, except in a modified sense. But the fact needs emphasis that when applied to the history of man the evolutionary principle of gradual and systematic unfolding does not hold, except in the most fundamental facts of the soul, and chiefly in the central fact of increasing ethical soul-content. Just as the progress of the Gulf Stream is not in the ripples and eddies upon its surface, but in the deep and resistless current beneath, so the evolutionary progress of nature is not in the short seasonal changes which vary infinitely, but in the life that persists through

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

them and is modified by them. It is this life that evolves and comes ever to higher expression and more complete adjustments.

So also in human history. There is little if any discernible evolution in historic events until we probe to the deeper things of the soul. To be sure, there are, as in nature, what may be called seasonal growths, as in Greek culture, Italian art, English literature, the French Revolution, and American government and industry. In such historic periods we can trace the starting of the sap, the bursting of the bud, the growth of leaf and blossom, the maturing of seed, and the falling of autumn leaves. Such seasonal growths are found also in the Jewish religion, the early Christian church, the German Reformation, Puritanism, and other movements. But Greek culture and Italian art do not keep on advancing; the Elizabethan age in English literature does not grow more Elizabethan; the French Revolution is followed by reaction. Likewise in religion, Judaism rises and falls; early Christianity degenerates into the superstition of the Dark Ages; the German Reformation becomes stereotyped in church formalism; English Puritanism is dissipated in

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

many directions, but does not become more Puritan.

Thus any particular historic movement exhibits only a seasonal development—rise, growth, decay. In view of what went before no one could predict the Dark Ages. No one can account for the sudden outburst of Italian art in the fifteenth century, or of invention in the nineteenth century. Much less can historic characters be accounted for. One would expect Moses at the end of Israel's history, not at its beginning; the great prophets as the result of growing schools, not as lone characters. One would look for John the Baptist and Christ as the flower and fruitage of Israel's noblest thought, not as the marvel of her most barren period. In like manner one would look for Dante not at the beginning, but at the end of Italian literature; and for Shakespeare not as one of the founders, but as the consummate flower of English letters.

The real evolutionary process of history lies deep within the soul of man. It is religious; and because religious, it is social. It is in this deep soul-growth, a growth in which the soul comes to possess ever

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

more of ethical content, that the "fulness of time" into which Christ came is to be found.

2. The Emphasis of the Twentieth Century

This deep historic evolution, or this "fulness of time"—whichever we choose to call it—will best be traced by asking and answering a few simple questions: (1) What kind of God have we? One God. (2) What does God require of man? Righteousness. (3) What is righteousness? Right conduct. (4) What is right conduct? Service-conduct. (5) How shall service-conduct be attained? Through faith in Christ. These questions and answers reveal not only the historic progress of religion, but also the place of religious emphasis to-day.

(1) What kind of God have we? Whether monotheism or polytheism was first held by man does not here concern us. The earliest history that we know—that of Egypt and Babylon—is saturated with polytheism, and holds only the slightest hints of monotheism. And the Hebrews—the great monotheists—in the beginning of their history, were not altogether free from poly-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

theism. But as history advanced polytheism disappeared from the faith of the Hebrews, and the struggle between the monotheism of the Hebrews and the polytheism of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylonia, became ever more strenuous, until in the early Christian centuries the polytheism of the great nations about the Mediterranean, and northward in Europe, gave place to monotheism. For two thousand five hundred years, and possibly for five thousand years, had we the early data to inform us, the battle raged over the question, What kind of god have we? It is the question most fundamental to the right development of the race. The answer of advancing history is that there is one God, an answer, the whole import of which, as bearing on the unity of the race, we even yet do not fully realize. But, for the dominant nations of the earth, the battle is over. The question is settled. History will never reverse its decision.

(2) What does God require of man? This was the question with which the Hebrews, who first arrived at clearly defined monotheism, especially concerned themselves. The unhesitating answer of their prophets and priests was that Jehovah, being

a holy God, required righteousness in his worshipers. The gods of the heathen were simply magnified men, with all the passions and lusts of men. They did not require their worshipers to be righteous. Indeed, some forms of heathen worship consisted in the grossest sensuality. Sacrifices were offered to appease the wrath of the gods and to purchase their favor. One of the hardest-fought battles of the prophets was to keep the Hebrew people from such idol-worship, and from ignoring Jehovah's demand for righteousness. Within Judaism the whole system of worship was a training in righteousness. This was the meaning of sacred places, sacred days, sacred fasts and feasts; it was the meaning of the tabernacle, the temple, the holy place, and the holy of holies; and the meaning of sacrifices without blemish, not to mention purgings and washings innumerable. This prophetic conception of a righteous God demanding righteousness in his worshipers not only passed over into Christianity, but Christ himself, who said, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" has been and is for all Christian nations the pattern of that righteousness which God demands.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

(3) What is righteousness? Is righteousness ceremonial or ethical? compliance with right forms or right conduct? Over this question prophets and priests contended for centuries. The priests defended the altars and sacrifices. For them faithfulness to correct forms and ceremonies constituted righteousness. The prophets, on the other hand, regarded these only as helps to a righteousness that was ethical. Their constant demand was: "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:16). Typical, and also conclusive of the whole struggle between prophets and priests, are the words of Samuel to Saul: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22).

But a thousand years after Samuel this struggle is seen still going on between Christ and the scribes and Pharisees. The latter had so perfected ceremonial righteousness that one could scarcely sit or rise or stand or walk or eat without the danger of infringing its precepts. Such ceremo-

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

nial righteousness Christ disregarded. His chief faults in the eyes of the ceremonialists were that he did not wash before eating, comply with the rules of the Sabbath observance, nor conform to their distinctions of clean and unclean. Christ, on the other hand, accused those who depended on ceremonial righteousness of tithing mint and anise and cummin and neglecting judgment, mercy, and faith. The strictest ceremonialists he called whited sepulchers, because they were robbers of widows and orphans.

This struggle between ceremonial and ethical righteousness has perpetuated itself in the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism. The Catholic maintains that, whatever one's ethical character, in order to be acceptable to God, he must be the beneficiary of the ordinances and ceremonies of the Church; while the Protestant maintains that righteousness consists in being right with God and man, and that all ceremonies are but helps to right character.

A different phase of this same struggle is found within Protestantism itself. For centuries right belief was more esteemed than right conduct; and not those whose conduct was wrong, but those whose beliefs

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

were rated wrong, were burned at the stake. Such, briefly indicated, is the most strenuous historic struggle of the past four thousand years. Century after century the conclusion has been slowly forming that the righteousness which God requires of men is ethical. Upon this conclusion the foremost nations of the world are agreed, and surely the answer is final. The world will never again believe that God is satisfied with ceremonies, theories, or faiths which do not bring repentance for sin or make men right in their conduct toward their fellows. In this refusal to believe in a religion which does not secure righteousness lies the significance of the alienation of many from the church—many of the laboring classes, who look upon the church as a rich man's institution; and many writers of fiction, who put their villains in the church and picture their heroes turning away from it. The masses refuse longer to separate salvation from right living, and feel that in this they stand with Christ, who said, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7: 16).

To recapitulate: What kind of god have we? One God. What does he require of

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

man? Righteousness? What is righteousness? Right conduct. The progress of past thinking has moved straight on from one of these conclusions to the other. To be sure, the processes of thinking and the conclusions reached have not been so clearly defined as is suggested by the way they are put down here. Historic processes always overlap and intermingle. But conclusions arrived at through centuries of conflict, and which are the result of the most vital processes of history, do not change.

(4) What is right conduct? The struggle over this question seems only begun. Is selfishness or service to be the law of life? Is the badge of right manhood the seeking to save one's life, or the finding of ways to spend it? In a word, Is the self-giving typified by the cross of Christ the sign-manual of right conduct or not? At last the ethics of Jesus are on trial; and the deep soul-struggle which this trial involves is the most significant struggle of history. Over the ethics of Jesus men are now fighting the battle for which all previous battles have been fought. In this twentieth century men are shrinking from the price to be paid for right conduct. Manhood is in its

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

Gethsemane, and is praying, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

To be more specific, when a man in business refuses to stand for a reform which is necessary to the good of the people because to do so will injure his business, is his conduct right or wrong? Precisely here—between cost to one's self and service to one's fellows—is the severest conflict of our day.

It will at once be perceived that this question, What is right conduct? not only probes the depths of every man's secret purposes, but has practical ramifications into all business, all politics, and all government. The right answer to this question, when expressed in life, will be the setting up of the kingdom of God on earth.

Jesus says that right conduct is service to one's fellows. In his great judgment parable he places in hell those who do not serve others. (Matt. 25:31-46.) Jesus places Dives in hell, not because he wronged or abused Lazarus, but because he did not serve him when in need. (Luke 16:19-31.) In his parables of the Pounds and the Talents also, Jesus places in hell men whose only fault was that they were not faithful in ministry. (Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 25:14-

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

30.) Jesus makes love to men inseparable from love to God, and points to the Samaritan ministering to the man who fell among thieves on the Jericho road, as giving proper expression to that love.

It is only placing the emphasis where it belongs and where Christ himself placed it, to say that the significance of Jesus for the modern man lies in the ethics of Jesus. Such an emphasis the strictest theologian need not fear. Indeed, the one who addresses himself adequately to the living of a Christlike life by paying what it costs to do so will find Jesus more human and more divine, more power-filled and power-giving, than the theologians have ever made him. Our age simply refuses to believe in a Christianity which does not advance from theories of Christ's person to the practice of Christ's principles.

Each century gives to Christianity its own peculiar point of contact with life, develops its own heroic situations, erects its own crosses, and makes its own demands for self-surrender and self-giving; but the principle of the cross runs through all centuries, and is never for a moment abrogated; and the place of the cross for the Chris-

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

tian of the twentieth century is in the practice of the ethics of Jesus. Apart from this there is no cross left worthy the effort of a man, no cross left which tasks his soul and calls for heroism, no cross left before which a man will sweat blood and become bigger and braver and more Christ-like than those who lived before him. In our age it requires no heroism to proclaim whatever theology one pleases, for thought and speech are untrammelled. Indeed, theories and theologies, which in the past tried men's souls and kindled fires under their feet, are matters of indifference today, even to Christians. However orthodox we may be, we cannot live by orthodoxy, for it no longer calls for heroism and sacrifice. Christian men must go forward and grapple with the task of their own century. They must be genuine brothers to their fellows, and give the service of their lives to redeem men from everything that is contrary to the mind of God, whether in life or environment. Unless Christians will do this, Christianity can but be turned back upon itself to droop and die. It must grow to live. And it must grow by setting for itself a task adequate to its growing man-

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

hood. A Christianity without heroism is without vitality; and a Christianity that shirks the crucifixion which its age imposes upon it is shorn of power.

What then is right conduct? Service-conduct, conduct which makes every man a beneficent minister to his fellows. This shall be the answer of the growing centuries, for "the world is going Jesus' way."

(5) The last question in the historic series is, how shall service-conduct be attained? For the practice of Christ's ethics, do men need Christ as a divine power in their lives? or can they fulfil the claims of God without the divine Christ as a transforming and enabling power? To this question there are different answers both within and without the church.

a. Outside of the church the masses of laboring men, for example, whose lives are made bitter by Christians who coin unwarranted profits out of their overwork, believe in the ethics of Jesus—his brotherliness, sympathy, hopefulness, and love. But when they see that the ethics of Jesus are not practised by those who hold the traditional faith of Jesus, the faith and the ethics become separated the one from the other in

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

their minds; and while they continue to believe in the ethics of Jesus, they cease to believe in Jesus himself as the Saviour of men. Whatever theologians may say, thinking men cannot be expected to believe in Christ's power to save men hereafter unless he has power mightily to change them here.

The oppressed laboring man has been cited simply as an illustration for the sake of definiteness. To-day men judge the power of Christ by the conduct of Christians. Never was this judgment rendered so relentlessly. And the immediate danger of our century is that men come to expect the fruit of Christliness without planting the tree; to drink from a stream of living water where there is no fountain; to have the ability to practise Christ's ethics without the power of Christ in their lives. Historically faith in Christ as divine Saviour and Master has been the seed from which the ethical tree grew, the fountain whence the ethical stream flowed. But whether this relation is real and necessary, is speedily becoming the crucial question of our age. It will not be answered theoretically by theologians, much less by critics, but practically by the doers of Christ's will.

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

b. Within the church many are asking whether the traditional faith in Christ is necessary to reproduce Christ's ethics. Some already incline to answer this question in the negative. The general consensus of Christian conviction has departed from the postulate of medieval and post-medieval theology, that correct belief in Christ as Saviour will save the soul. Since the days of Baur and Strauss the whole orthodox scheme of Christianity and the traditional view of Christ himself have been questioned; yet none of the questioners would abate one whit the requirements of Christ's ethics. The indifference of practically all Christians to doctrine, the drawing together of different denominations on the basis of essentials, the cooperation of Christians of every name in practical work, point in the same direction—to the growing conviction that traditional beliefs are of minor importance, and that living and working like Christ are of supreme importance. The whole drift of thought and conviction within the church is toward increasing emphasis upon Christ's ethics, and refusal to believe in the genuineness of the Christian life that does not practise them.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

But this is as yet only a drift, an increasing emphasis. The supreme task is coming on and is growing ever more apparent. It is a task peculiar to our century, involving a work of theological reconstruction which shall adequately relate Christ to life, and of practical living which shall adequately express Christ in life. It is the Christ lifted up by being reproduced in his followers that must command the faith and hold the love of the changing world.

Many to-day are unnecessarily alarmed over biblical criticism and the challenging of orthodoxy. The one final answer to all criticism and infidelity is the power of Jesus Christ at work changing a sinner into a saint, a selfish man into a servant, an oppressor into a helper, a worldling into a worshiper, an exploiter of men into a redeemer of men, a self-indulgent man into a man who goes to his Gethsemane and his cross as these confront him in daily life.

3. The Old and the New

Every thoughtful man not only respects, but reverences those who have wrought so well in the past. It neither indicates a right view of history nor manifests a spirit of

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

justice toward one's own generation to bring a railing accusation against the theology of the past or the ethics of the present. It is the farthest from the mind of the writer to do either. His aim, on the other hand, is to indicate in historic sequence the great soul-battles of the centuries as history records them, and to point out the fact that we are now in the midst of a moral conflict which requires heroes, and which, under God, will bring victory to the right, as all previous soul-battles have done.

In this historic view it becomes evident how necessary have been the theological conflicts of the past, conflicts which must needs have been waged before others could come on. All honor to the men who were heroes in past struggles, fighting on whatever side, so long as they wielded valiant swords with good consciences. The views of Christ's person and work held by them were necessary to their day, as they are also necessary to our day as a basis for any more adequate view that may be formed by the present or future generations.

Both the theological attitude and the ethics of our day are the best that history has recorded. While there are those within

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the church who are stereotyped in fixed philosophies of salvation, as were the Pharisees in their forms and ceremonies, there are also those—and they constitute the majority of Christian people—who are as receptive of and as responsive to the growing truth of our age as were the disciples to the teachings of Christ. And while there are those in the church who do not exemplify in their lives the ethics of Jesus, but hang their souls on a theory of salvation, there are others—and they also constitute the great majority—who do not look for salvation apart from the practice of the ethics of Jesus, which they regard as evidence of their union with and love for the Redeemer. They take Christ simply and seriously. Their hope of salvation is not in a theory to be held, but in a power to be experienced; not in a theology to be explained, but in a life to be lived; not in a ceremony to be performed, but in a love which warms the heart, quickens spiritual circulation, and gives prompt reaction to moral muscle.

Such facts and tendencies point to and demand a new interpretation of Christ for the modern mind, an interpretation in keep-

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

ing with the historic advancement already made—advancement both in theological knowledge and Christian conduct. An interpretation of the Christ is needed to-day that will give to Christ's ethics a more central and vital place in the whole process of salvation; an interpretation that will shame the man who calls Christ "Lord, Lord," and does not do the things that Christ says; an interpretation that will hold up to the scorn of all thinking men the one who hopes to enjoy the kingdom of Christ in glory, but does not glorify Christ by setting up his kingdom here; an interpretation that will stamp as a coward and a craven one who has the effrontery to trust in a crucified Redeemer for his own salvation, while refusing his own crucifixion for the redemption of his fellows; an interpretation that will bring the blush to any man who presumes to rejoice that he, a lost man, has been found, while indifferent to the fact that his fellows are still lost and perishing; an interpretation that will brand as with the condemnation of God every man who accepts for his own benefit the self-giving Christ while oppressing in any form or manner his weaker brother.

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

What such an interpretation will be as a theology it is vain to prophesy. It will be in keeping with the life and teachings of Jesus; it will be true to the principles enunciated by the apostles; it will be consonant with the unfolding of Christian truth in history; it will hold the person, Jesus Christ, at its very heart as the power of God for the transformation of individuals and society; it will deal little with theory and much with life; it will endeavor to set up the kingdom of Christ on earth by demanding the ethics of Christ from every one who accepts him—a demand calling for a self-surrender the most complete, the most difficult, and the most costly that any century has ever demanded, the days of the martyrs not excepted.

Were progress in Christian ethics not demanded by our century, such heroic surrender is imperative in order to vitalize Christianity itself. The churches are complaining that Christians do not pray, do not read the Bible, do not attend public services as once they did—all of which is true. But one, to offer more than perfunctory prayer, must feel a need; a soul, to feed on God's word, must be hungry;

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

men, to seek places of encouragement, cheer, and invigoration, must feel too weak for their tasks. He who will actually undertake to live as Christ requires him to live, will be driven to prayer, driven to the Bible, driven to every place of cheer and help that he can find, for he undertakes a task that will often make him sweat blood, and often nail him to a cross. But no less a task constitutes the significance of Jesus for the modern man.

It is vain to inveigh against the transitional state of theology in which we find ourselves. This is but the religious phase of a transition that is not only world-wide, but involves all subjects—the transition from philosophy to science. For centuries the great minds of the world dealt with philosophy. The method of deductive philosophy—and inductive philosophy never wholly escaped the deductive method—was to lay down a hypothesis and arrange the facts consistently with it. The explanation was assumed in the hypothesis, which the facts were arranged to prove. To-day practically all philosophers have turned scientists. Men are busy digging up the facts. If an explanation appears in the midst

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

of the facts, well ; but if not, the explanation can wait. Men believe in and live by the facts.

Theology is religious philosophy. And theological thought, like all philosophical thought, has shifted its attention from theory to fact. What are the facts about Christ—the events of his life, the truth that he taught, the appeal that he made to man, the power that he has to change the one who responds to his appeal? What are the facts about the Christian life—the possibility of conversion, the conditions of the change, the requirements of converts, and the possibility of meeting the requirements? Such are the questions that interest the rank and file to-day. Men are not interested in philosophical theology, much less in speculative criticism. The people as well as the philosophers have turned scientists. They want the facts. And this is their protection against speculation, both old and new. This passion for facts is big with promise for Christianity. Christ's teaching was that men should face the facts, believe the facts, live by the facts. He called men to himself, not that they might explain him, but that they might know his power in their lives.

Significance of Jesus for the Modern Man

One of the most certain facts about Christ is the special significance of his death—a fact central in prophetic utterance, as evidenced by the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; central in the teaching of Christ; central in the preaching of the apostles; central to whatever form of Christian faith has renewed and vitalized sinful men; and central in the missionary work of the world to-day.

Christ claimed to be the Son of God and to give his life to redeem men. He *did* suffer the just for the unjust, and by doing so gave the highest, most appealing, and most powerful expression to a principle which we meet everywhere in life, and without which this would be a red-handed, tooth-and-claw world. When any one, without any philosophy of these facts, believes them, allows himself to be appealed to by them, and responds to the appeal, a new-born love enters his soul, and he is changed, for the mightiest transforming force that can lay hold upon a man's soul is the knowledge that one who loves him is suffering unjustly on his behalf.

The more thorough-going, therefore, be the transition from philosophy to science, from theory to fact, the more Christian will

The Bible Message for Modern Manhood

the world become. As yet we are only in the kindergarten of science, for as yet our science deals for the most part with the physical, whereas most of our life has to do with the mental and spiritual. The more thoroughly and truly scientific we become the more fully shall we face, accept, and live by the simple facts of Jesus Christ as they appear in his person and in his work for the redemption of men, and the more fully shall we accept the responsibilities which those facts entail.

Bibliography

The literature of the subjects discussed in this volume is so large that to give a complete bibliography would be out of the question. The following works may be mentioned, however, as among those which have been helpful to the author in his studies.

I. CRITICISM

John Skinner. *Genesis: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*. New York, 1910.

J. E. McFadyen. *Old Testament Criticism and the Christian Church*. New York, 1903.

Sir Robert Anderson. *The Bible and Modern Criticism*. New York, Chicago, Toronto, 1903.

G. A. Smith. *Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament*. New York, 1901.

James Orr. *The Problem of the Old Testament*. New York, 1907.

A. T. Clay. *Light on the Old Testament from Babel*. Third edition. Philadelphia, 1907.

N. Schmidt. *The Prophet of Nazareth*. New York, 1907.

S. R. Driver. *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*. Tenth edition. New York, 1900.

S. R. Driver. *Modern Research as Illustrating the Bible*. London, 1909.

Bibliography

Marcus Dods. *The Bible, its Origin and Nature*. New York, 1905.

W. Sanday. *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*. New York, 1908.

II. HISTORY

A. P. Stanley. *History of the Jewish Church*. New edition. Three volumes. New York, 1893.

C. F. Kent. *A History of the Hebrew People: The United Kingdom*. Eighth edition. New York, 1901.

C. F. Kent. *A History of the Hebrew People: The Divided Kingdom*. Seventh edition. New York, 1899.

C. F. Kent. *A History of the Jewish People: The Babylonian, Persian, and Greek Periods*. Fourth edition. New York, 1901.

J. S. Riggs. *A History of the Jewish People: The Maccabean and Roman Periods*. New York, 1900.

G. T. Purves. *Christianity in the Apostolic Age*. New York, 1901.

J. H. Breasted. *A History of the Ancient Egyptians*. New York, 1908.

G. S. Goodspeed. *A History of the Babylonians and Assyrians*. New York, 1902.

E. A. W. Budge. *A History of Egypt: In the Neolithic and Archaic Periods*. New York, 1902.

D. R. Breed. *A History of the Preparation of the World for Christ*. Second edition. New York, Chicago, Toronto, 1893.

Shailer Mathews. *A History of New Testament Times*. New York, 1899.

Bibliography

W. Sanday. Outlines of the Life of Christ. New York, 1906.

Rush Rhees. The Life of Jesus of Nazareth. New York, 1901.

G. A. Smith. The Historical Geography of the Holy Land. Thirteenth edition. New York, 1907.

III. ARCHEOLOGY

Lyman Abbott. The Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews. Boston and New York, 1901.

A. Guyot. Creation. New York, 1893.

Karl Marti. The Religion of the Old Testament. London and New York, 1907. Translated into English by G. A. Bienemann. Edited by W. D. Morrison.

S. G. Smith. Religion in the Making. New York, 1910.

H. G. Tompkins. The Life and Times of Joseph. London, 1891.

J. D. Davis. Genesis and the Semitic Traditions. New York, 1894.

Ira M. Price. The Monuments and the Old Testament. Chicago, 1902.

James Robertson. Early Religions of Israel. Two volumes. New York, 1901.

IV. WORKS BEARING ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

Marcus Dods. Genesis. New York, 1887-1888.

C. F. Kent. Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History. New York, 1908.

C. F. Kent. Founders and Rulers of United Israel. New York, 1908.

Bibliography

C. F. Kent. *The Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah*. New York, 1909.

G. Rawlinson. *Exodus*. Third edition. New York and London.

D. W. Faunce. *Inspiration as a Trend*. Philadelphia, 1896.

G. A. Smith. *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*. Two volumes. New York, 1906.

S. R. Driver. *Isaiah, his Life and Times*. New York.

F. W. Farrar. *The Minor Prophets*. New York.

A. F. Kirkpatrick. *The Doctrine of the Prophets*. London and New York, 1892.

G. S. Goodspeed. *Israel's Messianic Hope*. New York and London, 1900.

V. WORKS ON THE LIFE, TEACHINGS, AND INFLUENCE OF CHRIST

N. D. Hillis. *The Influence of Christ in Modern Life*. New York, 1900.

Phillips Brooks. *The Influence of Jesus*. New York, 1894.

A. Edersheim. *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*. Fifth edition. New York and London, 1883.

M. G. Campbell. *The Crises of the Christ*. Third edition. New York, 1903.

H. E. Robins. *The Ethics of the Christian Life*. Philadelphia, 1904.

A. Harnack. *What is Christianity?* Second edition. New York and London, 1906. Translated into English by F. B. Saunders.

Bibliography

Shailer Mathews. *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament.* Chicago, 1905.

A. M. Fairbairn. *Studies in the Life of Christ.* New York, 1908.

H. H. Wendt. *The Teachings of Jesus.* New York, 1896. Translated into English by John Wilson.

A. M. Fairbairn. *The Place of Christ in Modern Thought.* New York, 1903.

James Denney. *The Death of Christ.* Fifth edition. New York, 1907.

A. B. Bruce. *The Kingdom of God.* Sixth edition. New York.

Shailer Mathews. *The Social Teachings of Jesus.* New York, 1902.

G. B. Stevens. *The Teachings of Jesus.* New York, 1909.

R. E. Speer. *The Principles of Jesus.* New York, Chicago, Toronto, 1902.

J. A. Leighton. *Jesus Christ and the Civilization of To-day.* New York, 1907.

F. G. Peabody. *Jesus Christ and the Christian Character.* New York, 1905.

F. G. Peabody. *Jesus Christ and the Social Question.* New York, 1901.

Shailer Mathews. *The Gospel and the Modern Man.* New York, 1910.

VI. THEOLOGY

W. N. Clarke. *An Outline of Christian Theology.* New York.

Lyman Abbott. *The Theology of an Evolutionist.* Boston and New York, 1898.

Bibliography

A. Sabatier. *Religions of Authority*. New York, 1901.

W. N. Clarke. *The Use of the Scriptures in Theology*. New York, 1905.

H. C. King. *Reconstruction in Theology*. New York, 1901.

A. B. Davidson. *The Theology of the Old Testament*. New York, 1904.

E. P. Gould. *The Biblical Theology of the New Testament*. New York and London, 1901.

G. B. Stevens. *The Theology of the New Testament*. New York, 1899.

VII. WORKS ON RELATED SUBJECTS

D. S. Cairns. *Christianity in the Modern World*. New York and London.

G. P. Fisher. *The Supernatural Origin of Christianity*. New York, 1887.

Lyman Abbott. *The Evolution of Christianity*. Boston and New York, 1900.

James Orr. *The Christian View of God and the World*. Ninth edition. New York, 1908.

G. Macdonald. *The Religious Sense in its Scientific Aspect*. New York and London, 1903.

Shailer Mathews. *The Church and the Changing Order*. New York, 1907.

R. S. Storrs. *The Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by its Historical Effects*. New York, 1884.

W. R. Harper. *Religion and the Higher Life*. Chicago, 1904.

C. E. Jefferson. *Things Fundamental*. New York, 1903.

Bibliography

P. C. Simpson. The Fact of Christ. New York, Chicago, Toronto, 1900.

F. G. Peabody. The Religion of an Educated Man. New York, 1903.

W. N. Rice. Christian Faith in an Age of Science. New York, 1903.

G. A. Gordon. Ultimate Conceptions of Faith. Boston and New York, 1903.

J. H. McIlvane. The Wisdom of the Holy Scriptures. New York, 1883.

G. P. Fisher. History of Christian Doctrine. New York, 1899.

John Grier Hibben. The Problems of Philosophy. New York, 1909.

DEC 28 1912

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: May 2005

PreservationTechnologies

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 15044
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 242 543 9

